Picasso; the formative years. A study of his sources (Libro completo). Anthony Blunt & Phoebe Pool

Foreword

The origin of this book is the thesis written by Miss Phoebe Pool under my supervision, for which she was awarded the Degree of Ph.D. in 1959. When it was submitted, Mr Law rence Gowing, who was one of the referees, suggested that much of the material which it contained could best be present ed in the form of a picture book with a long introduction. The latter would treat the literary background against which Picasso grew up, and the former would illustrate by means of visual parallels the sources on which he drew. The purpose of this analysis is not to demonstrate that Picasso was a plagiarist but on the contrary to show that, like all the great artists of the past, he has nourished his imagination by study ing material of the most varied kind, out of which he has made something wholly new and original. Seen in this way, Picasso is a great traditionalist as well as a great revolutionary.

The introduction is entirely the work of Miss Pool, but the selection of illustrations and the captions are the result of collaboration between the two authors.

We should like to express our sincere gratitude to Señor de Sucre, who supplied information about Picasso's early life in Barcelona and helped in tracking down works by his early friends; to Señor Blasco Ferrer, who provided photo graphs of unpublished works of Nonell in his possession, and to the O'Hana Galleries for their photographs of Picasso's drawings. Professor George Zarnecki photographed a number of plates in Catalan periodicals not available in this country; Mr Douglas Cooper kindly read the text and made many valuable suggestions; and Mr John Richardson called our attention to an important unpublished drawing by Picasso (illus. 7). We should like to thank them all very heartily.

Picasso's movements during his early years:

1881 October 25th, bom Malaga.

1891 Family moved to Corunna.

1895 Family moved to Barcelona.

Picasso visits Madrid.

1901 Early spring, Madrid. Returns to Barcelona. April- December, Paris. December, returns to Barcelona.

1902 Autumn in Paris.

1903 Barcelona.

1904 Spring, Paris (13 Rue Ravignan, le bateau-lavoir, where he lived until 1909).

1905 In summer, few weeks' visit to Holland.

1906 In summer, visit to Gosol (Pyrenees), passing through Barcelona.

1897 Autumn and winter, Picasso in Madrid.

1898 Picasso visits Horta de San Juan (Horta de Ebro),

Tarragona.

1900 October-December, Picasso in Paris. returns to Barcelona.

December, Paris. December, returns to Barcelona.

1902 Autumn in Paris.

1903 Barcelona.

1904 Spring, Paris (13 Rue Ravignan, le bateau-lavoir, where he lived until 1909).

1905 In summer, few weeks' visit to Holland.

1906 In summer, visit to Gosol (Pyrenees), passing through Barcelona.

Picasso the formative years:

Max Jacob said that Picasso and his friends were deter mined to make 'beaucoup de pastiches volontaires pour être sûr de n'en pas faire d'involontaires'. Yet pastiche is hardly the word for the imaginative transformations which are illustrated in this book. Whereas the young Degas, Manet or Van Gogh often copied literally works which they admired, Picasso after his early youth more frequently used other pictures as starting points for the creation of something very different. There was an ele ment of personal daring and perhaps of Andalusian panache in this independence of the model. An old friend of Picasso, remembers him coming into 'Els Quatre Gats' in 1901 and setting down on one side a copy he had just made in Madrid from part of 'Las Meninas' and on the other his own 'Dancer', saying, 'Velasquez did that, Picasso did that'. Even earlier he was resolved not to be the slave of any one master, and wrote to a friend from Madrid in 1897, T am against following a determined school as it brings out nothing but the mannerism of those who follow this way'.

Picasso's constant traffic with other artists' styles was partly the normal method of a young painter teaching himself his trade, carried to abnormal lengths by his tremendous power of imitation—he was able to use, transform or mock the idiom of others with a skill that reminds one of James Joyce (and since he could imitate everybody it was tempting to do so). But he was also interested in the different languages of art for their own sake, just as many early twentieth-century writers had the habit of juggling with a variety of older styles. Obvious examples of this tendency in literature were Picasso's friend Max Jacob, whose poetry was full of

parodies and reminiscences, or du Plessys, a follower of Moréas, who could write at will in the style of the Song of Roland, Villon, Jehan de Meung and others. A little earlier, Laforgue's Complainte de Lord Pierrot begins with an ironic parody of Au clair de la lune, and later Joyce, Pound and Eliot were to make similar parodies.

All this seems very far from the nineteenth century and from Cézanne's 'We must give the image of what we see, forgetting everything that has appeared before our time', for

Picasso was a highly conceptual painter, more often excited by ideas or by the works of other artists than by that direct, prolonged and intense contact with the object that inspired Cézanne. His friends Mir and Raynal both confirm this, and the latter wrote,

Picasso looked for the essence of things in other works of art, and he realised that in order to distil this essence himself, the most advanced starting point was not reality and nature but the work of other artists'. This is one reason for studying his early friendships and milieu in some detail. Other reasons are the great historical importance of 'Les Demoiselles d'Avignon', the strange, disquieting and experimental picture to which the work of all these years leads up, and the fact that Picasso, who was popular and had his choice of companions, chose to live in Paris amongst poets who were nearly all men distinguished or interesting in their own right. The 'Modernists' of Barcelona as well as Max Jacob, André Salmon and Guillaume Apollinaire were all lively and original characters who had a considerable impact upon Picasso's development.

But to turn for inspiration from nature to the work of other artists was only in part a matter of temperament.

The fact that it rarely occurred to Picasso in these years to paint realistically in the nineteenth-century sense of the word, although his earliest works had shown that he was capable of doing so, is of course connected with the literary, philosophical and artistic reaction against the Naturalists, who well before the turn of the century were considered stodgy and vieux jeu both in Paris and among the 'Modernists' of Barcelona. Courbet's conviction that 'Le beau donné par la nature est supérieur à toutes les conventions de l'artiste' was rejected, in part because it was based on the discredited doctrine of Positivism; and Schopenhauer's works, well-known in Barcelona, helped to popularise the idea that nature is only an appearance. Maurice Denis, who was influential in the club of San Luc in Barcelona, and probably had some effect on the simplified rhythm and the sentiment of Picasso's 'Maternités', wrote that "l'art, au lieu d'être la copie, devient la déformation subjective de la nature". Denis was also highly indignant against the master who criticised his idealised nude study by saying 'Vous ne coucheriez pas avec cette femme-là'. Some of the mediaevalists in Barcelona felt so strongly against satirical naturalism that they tore up the French comic paper Gil Blas.

Picasso's choice of books showed a similar antirealist taste. Raynal, writing probably of about 1905, said that Picasso owned the works of Rimbaud, Verlaine and Mallarmé, but no naturalist or psychological novels, which he detested. Mallarmé and Rimbaud both frequently declared that the true subject of art was the idea» the general, and not life's particularity. This incidentally fitted in, or was made to fit in, with Gauguin's synthesism and his linear simplifications. Completely alien both to these writers and to Picasso was that affection for the unique, fleeting and particularised aspects of nature which made Constable date his cloud studies, adding the exact time of day and the direction of wind, or Duranty's belief that in rendering a man's back view one should show his age, temperament and social status. Picasso's preference for more timeless and generalised subjects may be partly responsible for the choice of such ritual figures as mother and child, harlequin or clown. We know also that Picasso liked the works of the Catalan poet Juan Maragall which were published in 1906 just before the artist went to Gosol when he translated one into French. Like many Catalans of the time

Maragall was more interested in German literature than in naturalism and he translated Novalis's The Blue Flower into Catalan.

In turning away from the naturalism of his predecessors Picasso was also reacting against the practice of his own father. Apparently he told Sabartés that the latter painted 'dining-room pictures'. 'Fur and feathers, pigeons and lilac, together with an occasional landscape completed his repertoire. He was happiest when he could make his feathered models symbolic of moral or sentimental drama, as in his painting of a happy couple perched on the threshold of their pigeon-house, while a third party, ruffled with jealousy, spies on them from below.' Naturally, the father could not at first reconcile himself to his son's novelties. The painter Bemareggi declares that when he and Picasso were studying together in Madrid in 1897, they would send home their copies to Picasso's father. If these were of Velasquez, Goya or the Venetians all was well, but when they sent copies of El Greco he replied severely, 'You are following the bad way'.

Anti-realism was only one of many characteristics that fin-de-siècle, 'decadent' or symbolist movements had in common, but the atmosphere differed from country to country. Barcelona with its particular brand of modernism was important to Picasso's development long after he first visited Paris at the end of 1900; for it must be remembered that Picasso crossed the Pyrenees seven times before he settled in Paris in April 1904. In Paris he lived at first almost entirely amongst Spaniards from Barcelona and could not speak French. Even in the Rue Ravignan from 1904 onwards his old friends constantly visited him. Gertrude Stein and others have rightly perceived the Spanish basis of the Blue Period, even though this began in Paris shortly before his de parture for Barcelona in December 1901 and owed some thing to Gauguin, Maurice Denis, Carrière and Van Gogh. His friend Nonell's drawings are probably the forerunners of many of the crouching, outcast figures painted in the years 1902-4.

The Nietzschean writer and dramatist Jaime Brossa compared the artistic climate of Barcelona to hearing, in a fin-de-siècle café, a Ballade of Chopin and the 'Marseillaise' being played at the same time. This exciting ferment of literary and political insurgence must have had some effect on the parallel if unconnected extravagances of Gaudí and Picasso. (Picasso, it may be said in parentheses, admired Gaudí as a curiosity but never met him; the architect was thirty years senior, a bigoted Catholic and member of the rival club of San Luc, disapproving strongly of the atheist, anarchist and Bohemian 'Els Quatre Gats'.)

The version of the international fin-de-siècle movement flourishing in Barcelona emphasised 'Sturm und Drang', a Nietzschean energy and defiance of the bourgeois rather than the lilies and langours of Swinburne and Burne-Jones or the pessimistic irony of Laforgue. There was more vitality and toughness in Barcelona than in England (or France), partly because of the strenuous political movements and the fiery anarchism and separatism of Catalonia, which incidentally increased the popularity of the Middle Ages as the time of her grandeur and autonomy before the centralising policy of Ferdinand and Isabella. When Picasso was first living in Barcelona hardly a year passed without a bomb out rage, and there was considerable feeling in favour of the prisoners detained in the fortress of Montjuich after one of these incidents. The hardships of the soldiers returning from the Cuban war also aroused popular sympathy

and were probably the subject of one of the drawings of Picasso's friend Nonell (see illus. 66). We shall see from Picasso's own works, such as the drawing of an anarchist meeting, that he was affected by this social unrest as well as by the poverty of his own family.

Perhaps the most obvious feature of the Catalan 'Modernismo' was an obsession with everything northern. Rusiñol even described 'Els Quatre Gats', Which was modelled on a Montmartre café, as 'a Gothic tavern for those in love with the North'. In the reviews to which Picasso contributed, such as Pel iPloma, Joventut and Catalunya Artística, there were frequently translations from German literature and articles on Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. From 1900 onwards an Asociación Wagneriana, modelled on one in Munich, used to meet in 'Els Quatre Gats', and there were frequent performances of the operas, notably Siegfried and Tristan and Isolde. The new avant-garde theatres produced plays by Ibsen and Maeterlinck, most often Ghosts and The Intruder, which had an obsessive attraction for Picasso's generation. There was a natural link between the plays of Ibsen, Hauptmann, Strindberg and Bjômson, exalting heroic individual action and the 'vitalismo' of Nietzsche. Nietzsche, probably the greatest intellectual influence of the time, came as an antidote to the numbing determinism of the Materialists, the cult of pity in Tolstoy and of death and pessimism in Wagner and Schopenhauer. A friend of Picasso has said that before he was seventeen he had read most of the works of Nietzsche and that this was characteristic of his companions in 'Els Quatre Gats'. According to him Picasso took most of his knowledge of Nietzsche from Maragall and from the rather banal poet Joan Oliva Bridgman, two of whose works Picasso was commissioned to illustrate (see illus. 39).

Nietzsche was first introduced into Barcelona by Pompeyo Gener. Gener, born in 1848, took a medical degree in Paris and produced poetry, plays and translations. In spite of his age he was on the staff of Joventut and published numerous translations, extracts and articles on Nietzsche, including a long article, 'Arte Dionisiaco', on his death in 1900. Gener emphasised the need for men to be heroic and to reflect the rhythm of the universe, becoming fiery, revolutionary and progressive. Another disciple, Jaime Brossa, who had at one time been forced to flee to London because of his anti militarism, extracted from Nietzsche's works creeds which he called 'the great Excelsior of the twentieth century' and the 'cult of the me', adopting Nietzsche's anti-Christian, anti-bourgeois, anti-Philistine teaching.

Nietzsche's doctrine probably reinforced Picasso's temperamental unwillingness to be a good apprentice, like Matisse, with steady artistic aims. His inclination to wards constant changes of style would have fitted in with Nietzsche's belief that art proceeds by violent explosions. The Nietzschean cult of unhindered self-expres sion and contempt for Philistine and bourgeois values may have helped Picasso to disregard criticism and with 'Les Demoiselles d'Avignon' even to invite it. Leo Stein describes Picasso as late as about 1905 in a Nietzschean mood, perhaps in jest, raging at a bus queue on the grounds that the strong should go ahead and take what they want. Nietzsche also condemned hedonism and sensuous art, and this became the creed of Picasso's friends in opposition to that of the Nabis and Fauves.

The optimistic view about the future of art current in Barcelona—that it was eternally evolving towards perfection and that everyone was waiting on the threshold of the

twentieth century for the appearance of a great new style of art—probably also owed something to Germany. The spread of Hegelianism, German historicism and contemporary ideas of progress perhaps encouraged such critics as Picasso’s friend Junyent to declare that it was impossible to resurrect any past style and that ‘the nineteenth century has died with the consolation of seeing on the horizon of the infinite the splendour of a great art, an elevated art, strong, complicated, earthy and spiritual’.This kind of belief created a favourable climate for producing experimental art; it was apparently not spoilt for Picasso and his friends by the fact that Junyent proceeded to declare that Turner, Rossetti, Holman Hunt and Millais had reached the highest point ever achieved by painting.

Two of Picasso’s early illustrations, ‘La Boija’ and ‘El Clam de las Verges’, seem akin to the world of an other northerner, Edvard Munch (1863-1944), particularly to his work inspired by the morality dispute of 1885, which centred on questions of sexual ethics, raised by the controversial novel From Christiana's Bohemia, written by Munch’s friend Hans Jagers. On a visit to Paris in 1889-90, where he was influenced by Gauguin, Munch had written, ‘No longer paint interiors with men reading and women knitting. There must be living beings who breathe and feel and love and suffer. . . People would understand the sacredness of them and take off their hats as if they were in church.’ The works produced in this spirit which are most akin to Picasso’s early illustrations were executed in Germany round about 1895. Examples are the pictures of women brooding alone in rooms, like the characters depicted in the plays of Ibsen and Munch’s friend Strindberg, such as ‘The Morning After’(illus. 45), ‘Puberty’(1894) or the ‘Frieze of Life’ (illus. 46; 1899 onwards) although Picasso did not apparently know them at this period. The long faces drawn by Picasso in the Barcelona period such as ‘The Mad Woman’ (illus. 41) or ‘The Old Man and Young Woman’ do resemble Munch, but they could have had other sources, such as El Greco (see illus. 51) or Dario de Regoyos who collaborated with Verhaeren in a book called España Negra which Picasso planned to imitate (see illus. 56). In any case Catalan artists such as Casas, Rusiñol and Picasso’s friend Nonell, who went to France, may easily have brought back German editions of Munch’s graphic art. Moreover Stuck’s silhouettes in Jugend and Paul Rieths’ diseuses are some what like those of Picasso in the Barcelona Museum and like the works of his friends Pichot and Opisso. The links between Munich and Barcelona at this time were strong, as can be seen from Picasso’s letter of 1897 when he writes, ‘If I had a son who wanted to be a painter I would not keep him in Spain a moment, and do not imagine I would send him to Paris (where I would gladly be myself) but to Munik. . . as it is a city where painting is studied seriously without regard to fixed ideas of any sort such as pointillism and all the rest’.

English and French Art in Barcelona:

About the turn of the century Barcelona was also very much alert to English culture. In 1898 there was a ses sion of the artists’ club of San Luc in memory of Burne- Jones, and in June 1900 Miguel Utrillo was in London as correspondent for Pel i Ploma, although admittedly he thought it necessary in his first article to justify and explain why he was there instead of Paris. The great protagonist of English art in Barcelona was Alejandro

de Riquer who had worked in London and produced a study of Aiming Bell. He became artistic director of the periodical Luz and later of Joventut, where he published illustrations by Rossetti for a poem of Roviralta and by Boyd-Houghton and Burne-Jones for D'Annunzio's story of Lazarus (see illus. 21). His own book-plates and posters are very like English mediaevalising works of the time. More anglophil than 'Els Quatre Gats' was the group called Guayaba, which met in the studio of Picasso's friend, the photographer Vidal y Ventosa : the members of this circle also admired the works of Bôcklin and Vogler, the Pre-Raphaelite of Bremen, who at the age of twenty was considered worthy of a special number of Joventut devoted to him. Other rather sentimental followers of the English represented in the Bar celona gallery are Tamburini and Brull, whose "Vision" (1896; see illus. 21) is reminiscent of the illustrations in English books at the beginning of the century; translations of Pre-Raphaelite poems and of Ruskin were known, and The Studio, generally to be found in 'Els Quatre Gats', was one of those papers the receipt of which was always acknowledged in Joventut.

The precise effect of Pre-Raphaelite painting on Picasso is hard to assess. The artist himself, however, declares that the visit to Paris in 1900 was meant to be only a halt on the way to England. He was drawn to England by love of Burne-Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites and by an idealisation of English women derived from the love affairs of Lady Hester Stanhope. The fluid, wavy shapes of Burne-Jones are detectable in many of Picasso's early drawings and paintings. The drooping heads and interest in ill-health which persist in Picasso's work up to 1904 may owe something to the Pre-Raphaelites, and his pastel of a woman with a flower in her hair, published in Arte Joven in 1901, has much in common with their work (see illus .18). Pre-Raphaelite art may also have prepared Picasso to like authentic Gothic art as well as the primitivism of Gauguin and Maurice Denis.

The Pre-Raphaelites were not the only English artists admired in Barcelona. J. F. Rafols, in his work Modernismo y Modernistas, says that the first pictures he saw in his life were English engravings, and that, when very young, he fell in love with one of the singers at Sitges because she seemed an incarnation of illustrations in El Carnerada which reflected Whistler and Shannon. Romanticism about England was often bound up with the pseudo-mediaeval illustrations so much admired by Gual, Alejandro de Riquer and Brull. A great number of drawings in Luz and Joventut were either executed by Englishmen or were close imitations of them by Catalan artists. W. B. Macdougall's illustrations for Songs of Love and Death and works by Walter Crane, Harold Nelson, Eleanor Fortescue Brickdale and Edwin Austin Abbey were frequently reproduced and discussed. In the complicated parentage of Picasso's menu-card for 'Els Quatre Gats' of 1898 (see illus. 9) the contours may owe something to Japanese prints or stained glass windows, but the general effect is more like Kate Green away, whose work was well-known in Barcelona, according to her obituary in Pel i Ploma (1901), and probably influenced Torre Esquís, the decorator and illustrator of children's books (1879-1936). Analogies for the style of the menu-card could also be found in illus trations of English children's books, English posters reproduced in the magazine Poster, and the illustrations in The Studio.

In 1903 Pel i Ploma published a long obituary of Whistler with many illustrations. The older generation, men such as Casas and Rusiñol, who influenced the young Picasso,

had in their time been much affected by the tonalities of Whistler, as can be seen in Rusiñol's 'Lectura Romántica' in the Barcelona Museum (see illus. 31). As early as 1896-8 Picasso's friend Nonell used Whistler-like Japanese scrawls in the background of one of his drawings for the 'Idiots of Bohi' series (see illus. 68), and Whistler's use of blue may have been of some importance later in the formation of Picasso's Blue Period style.

The first number of Joventut in 1900 contained a long illustrated biography of Beardsley, 'The Fra Angelico of Satanism', who seems spiritually akin to the Picasso of such works as 'Le Bock', 'Femme avec une corneille', and the rather repulsive, hunched-up nude of 1906, later called 'La Gommeuse', which is not unlike Beardsley's 'Messalina'. Other artists in Barcelona also imitated Beardsley (see illus. 24,25) and his illustrations for Tannhäuser, Tristan and Isolde and the Morte d'Arthur were much admired. One of his designs for Ernest Dowson's play The Pierrot of the Minute (see illus. 135), in subject at least, foreshadows Picasso's 'Death of Pierrot' (see illus. 135).

During these years there were sometimes complaints in the periodicals, and sometimes congratulations, about the fact that the influence of French culture in Barcelona was decreasing. But this was only comparatively, not absolutely, true. It was still to Paris, not to Berlin, Munich or London that Casas, Rusiñol, Utrillo, Nonell, Casagemas and Picasso all went. The older generation who founded 'Els Quatre Gats' were still realists; Casas and Rusiñol imparted the principles of Impressionism, while their letters from Montmartre to La Vanguardia supplied a certain background knowledge of the French artistic scene. Though Picasso did not become an Impressionist in Barcelona, he painted some near-impressionist pictures such as 'On the Deck'—which, incidentally, represents the top of a horse-bus, not, as is usually said, the upper deck of a bateau-mouche on the Seine— as soon as he arrived in Paris, and this implies previous familiarity with this school.

More important to him probably were the illustrations in the French papers available in Barcelona, such as Le Rire, La Vie Parisienne, Gil Blas and V Assiette au Beurre. We know that these papers were studied in Barcelona, partly from acknowledgements in Joventut and other periodicals, partly from the testimony of Picasso's friends. It was through the illustrations in these papers, and perhaps through their imitators Torres García, Gosé and Opisso, that Picasso first came to know the work of Steinlen and Lautrec, both important influences on him. Certain works executed in Barcelona and in Paris in the early months of 1901 show obvious affinities with these artists in subject and treatment, and some are downright pastiches (see illus. 32). Lautrec's influence is very perceptible in Picasso's pastels and drawings in the Barcelona Museum, such as "La Chata" or 'The Artist shown with Casagemas', both of 1899. Lautrec did a well-known poster of a hanged man which may have inspired Picasso to paint a similar figure with two lovers below him, a work which is recorded but has not survived. Like Lautrec Picasso at this time observed women without much prettification or gallantry; his courtesans seem tough and predatory. But Lautrec and Picasso are both more interested in their sitters as people than was the later Degas, and are less concerned with the stresses and strains of their bodies in various positions; their women are never 'like animals washing themselves'. Although Picasso belonged to anti-naturalist literary circles his work at this time still shows a certain psychological or story-telling

quality, and one can speculate about ‘Au Café’ or ‘La Conversation’ (see illus. 36) or the girl in front of her crucifix as one might wonder about the characters in stories. Once in Paris his pictures gradually became less anecdotal, his faces more expressionless, probably owing to the horror which his new avant-garde friends, such as André Salmon, felt for literary paintings.

The Swiss draughtsman Alexandre Steinlen (1859- 1923), who came to Paris in 1881 and made his name with illustrations for the cabaret songs of Bruant, for Gil Blas and for Le Chambard Socialiste, was an important influence on Picasso’s work during the transition to the Blue Period, for he could be gaily topical or fierily preoccupied with the life of the poor. There is less Bohemian night-life in Steinlen than in Lautrec and more explicit satire of every-day existence in Paris. Thus, two old people, huddled frozenly on a public bench, ask each other "The prisons"? Are they heated?’, and children looking into a baker’s shop window discuss whether the stuff they see is to eat. Other draughtsmen for the French illustrated papers who probably influenced Picasso are Forain (see illus. 37) and Gavarni.

Like the French Symbolists of La Plume and La Revue Blanche, the young painters of Barcelona preferred Moreau, Redon, Carrière and Puvis to the Impressionists. Carrière they saw as a decadent in spite of himself; his influence was strong, since Luisa Vidal had been an ardent disciple of his in Paris, and the school which Rusiñol attended in the Avenue de Clichy boasted of him as a Professor, though in fact the teaching was done by minor figures. His many melancholy pictures of Mother and Child certainly affected those of Picasso (see illus. 91). Sr. de Sucre has said that Picasso came to know Carrière’s work through Junyent, with whom he shared a studio for part of the Barcelona period, and in Paris he could, also have seen it in galleries and reproduced in books. The influence of Carrière is strikingly brought out in the drawing of two children (see illus. 93), which is an exact imitation of his style, and on which the name of Carrière was inscribed, apparently later. In general Carrière’s figures are more shadowy and atmospheric, less sharply linear than Picasso’s, but the sentimentality and the feeling for suffering are similar.

In spite of the Catalan cult of toughness and vitality the intellectuals of Barcelona shared many of the ‘mor bid’, ‘decadent’ tastes of the international fin-de-siècle movement, which are important ingredients in the Blue Period. During one of the Modernist fiestas held in Sitges Santiago Rusiñol gave a great discourse foreshadowing Picasso’s remark that art emanates from pain and sadness; much of what he said could serve as a programme for the Blue Period. ‘Live on the abnormal and unheard o f . . . sing the anguish of ultimate grief and discover the Calvaries of the earth; arrive at the tragic by way of what is mysterious; divine the unknown.’ (Sr. de Sucre writes that he once gave Picasso a present of Rusiñol’s Oraciones illustrated by Miguel Utrillo and Suzanne Valadon.) Picasso’s ‘La Boija’, ‘Le Fou’ and innumer able pale haggard creatures remind us that, as Mario Praz has shown, the Decadents found illness and mad ness exciting. Sometimes this interest took an erotic form, as in Wagner, Huysmans and the Pre-Raphaelites ; sometimes it was connected with a feeling for the poor, or a belief that deformity and emaciation were the signs of spirituality. Nonell, as we shall see, studied the crétins in Bohi; Junyent in Joventut praised modem art for dealing with ‘the disequilibrium of human faculties, the macabre visions of sorrowful

souls', and later went mad himself. Joventut continued to show a great interest in pathology, publishing articles on madness, consump tion and morphine addiction (cf. Rusiñol's picture, illus. 44) as well as a story about two mad sisters who talk to the branches of trees.

It was characteristic of the fin-de-siècle to link love with disaster. In music and literature it was the time of Tristan and Isolde, Pelléas et Mélisande and Deirdre o f the Sorrows', in painting there are innumerable examples of doomed passion from Rossetti's 'Carlisle Tower' to the lovers of Munch, desperately embracing or tortured by jealousy and vampire women. Picasso had personal experience of this kind of tragedy in the suicide of his close friend Casagemas on account of a woman, and made it the subject of an enigmatic picture 'L'Evocation' (see illus. 100). And, whatever may be the true significance of 'La Vie' (see illus. 115) for Picasso, the canvases in the background indicate that love is linked with despair. The young man might well be repeating the words of a Catalan poem published in Pel i Ploma:

'No avancis ni un pas, ma aimia

No avancis ni un pas, amor.

Que el dea que ens confonguessim

Nostre encant s'hauria fos.'

'Do not advance by a step my darling, do not advance by a step, O love, for the day when we come together our enchantment will vanish away.' At the same time Picasso's attitude to the Decadents was always slightly ambi valent. The picture of Jaime Sabartés in 1899 tricked out with the general apparatus of fin-de-siècle aestheticism and called 'Poeta Decadente'was conceived as a parody, and as early as 1897 Picasso was writing that he had produced something for Barcelona Cómica more 'modernist' and extravagant than anyone else's contribution.

Sympathy with the poor. Isidro Nonell:

In Barcelona there were already signs of the fierce and humanitarian Picasso, who was later roused to paint 'Guernica' and 'War and Peace' and to declare: 'Paint ing is not done to decorate houses. It is an instrument of war for attack and defence against the enemy.' His old Catalan friends say that he was an anarchist at this time, and his rather primitive drawing of an anarchist meeting (illus. 60) was probably sketched from direct observation. The members of the group who met in 'Els Quatre Gats' had the same sympathies and wore trousers narrowing at the ankles, copied from those of anarchist agitators. From 1895 onwards an anarchist journal, Ciencia Social, published, amongst other things, cartoons of Daumier and works by Millet and Courbet, and Joventut too, nearly always began with a long article on political and regional grievances. The works of Bakunin were well-known and Joventut carried advertisements for those of Kropotkin. The achievements of the Modernists took place against a background not only of bombs but of suppression. All the works of Maeterlinck and d'Annunzio were condemned by the Church, and Hauptmann's Die Weber was banned from the stage

because the workmen in it broke up a factory. Picasso and his friends may well have known the printed version of the play, with illustrations by Kâthe Kollwitz (see illus. 62).

Picasso's social ideas can best be illustrated from Arte Joven, the short-lived magazine of which he was joint-editor in Madrid in early 1901, since he probably had more influence on its contents than he had had on any publication in Barcelona. It is significant that the only paper over which he had control should be one with social and political leanings. The editors of Arte Joven adopted a tone of defiance. 'We know that the gilded youth of Madrid and the illustrious ladies of the aristocracy do not like Arte Joven! That pleases us im mensely.' The first number showed a group of peasants, marching heavily under the weight of their misery. There was also a somewhat 'extreme' article which asserted that men should abstain from voting since it only fortifies the injustice of the state. The great necessity is 'to kill the law', a concept which must already have been familiar to Picasso in the moral field from such poems as Bridgman's Cry of the Virgins which he had already illustrated. Arte Joven also published a poem by Alberto Lozano (see illus. 54) condemning the rich and idle, the sense of which was, 'If you do not work and fulfil God's command to Adam you are not my brother or God's son'. There were also the inevitable articles on Nietzsche. It was characteristic of Picasso's feeling for social outlaws that, soon after his visit to Madrid, he did a Munch-like drawing of a man resembling himself handcuffed between two gendarmes (see illus. 94).

Probably the first Spanish painter of the time to show the poor with realism and compassion, rather than as the stock, picturesque beggars of traditional genre, was Isidro Nonell (1873-1911). Some time just before 1900 he lent his studio to Picasso, who was eight years younger, and it is almost certain that his works influenced the paintings of the Blue Period in both style and content. Nonell, the son of a man who made pasta for soup, began as a plein-air painter, but soon reacted both from Impressionism and from what was called 'la sweetness inglés' (presumably the Pre-Raphaelite senti mentality of Brull and de Riquer). In 1896 he went to Bohi, in the Pyrenees, and made studies of the Crétins living there, which he worked up into paintings later shown in the Salon of La Vanguardia in Paris and in 'Els Quatre Gats'. Nonell made use here of expressive deformations and the simplified closed silhouette which is so often employed by Picasso in his Blue Period (see illus. 71, 72). His contour lines are heavy and dramatic; there are strong reminiscences of Japanese prints and of Daumier, whose work he could have seen in the pages of Gil Blas. The woman huddled over her baby is a kind of caricature without malice. It was, of course, not till much later that Picasso turned to this kind of theme. At this time, when he was only fifteen, he confined himself almost entirely to depicting his family or street and café scenes, and was about to go to Madrid where he made copies in the Prado.

In 1897 Nonell went to Paris, held an exhibition at the Le Bare de Bouteville Gallery, and was compared by enthusiastic critics to Edgar Allan Poe. Judging by his later works he must also have studied the art of Van Gogh and Daumier. On his return to Barcelona he made some impressive drawings of the miserable people repatriated after the Cuban War, one of which, a dragging line of figures, is reminiscent of Van Gogh's 'Prison Yard' (see illus. 65, 67). About this time Nonell and Picasso had studios in the same building, and more than once Picasso drew Nonell's portrait. Their influence on

each other may have been mutual. There are works of Nonell from 1902 onwards which seem to derive from Picasso (see illus. 75), but in earlier years Nonell was probably the originator. His 'Grupo de Pobres', dated 1899 (see illus. 69), with its miserable figures huddled in profile along the corner of a building, looks back to Goya and Daumier and forward to Picasso's hunched, seated figures of 1902. His solitary figure of 1901-2 (see illus. 73, published in Pel i Ploma in January 1902) resemble those of Picasso's Blue Period in motive, composition and the use of heavy, limp folds of drapery and are roughly contemporary with them, for though Picasso's Blue Period began in Paris in late 1901, the most characteristic and the most Nonellian works of this phase were painted later, and this is especially true of his paintings of beggars sitting on the ground. The works done in Paris in late 1901 are mostly of people with their elbows on a café table, like 'Le Bock', or portraits, or the 'Maternités' which owe so much to Maurice Denis and Carrière. Such works as 'La Femme assiseau Capuchon'(seeillus.72), painted after Picasso's return to Barcelona, seem to derive in part at least from Nonell's early work. That this fact has not been more usually recognised may be due to a coolness which, according to some writers, later sprang up between Picasso and Nonell, but their relation must have been close, since Nonell at one time chose to live in the bateau-lavoir where Picasso was already settled.

In the motives both for Nonell's crucial visit to Bohi and in many of the contributions to Arte Joven, the cult of the primitive was mixed with sympathy for peasants and the poor. Primitivism was an international taste, rooted in English romanticism, in the writings of Rousseau, and in the doctrines of David's pupils, who called themselves les Primitifs. It was a revulsion against civilisation, stimulated in the second half of the nineteenth century by a growing dislike of industrialism and a feeling that men had not always so recklessly squandered their lives in pursuit of the means of life. It was the motive behind the mediaevalism of William Morris and Gauguin's move to Tahiti; it finds a voice in Van Gogh's letters; and earlier it had led Courbet's friend Champfleury to collect popular songs and broadsheets and to write, 'The idol cut on a tree-trunk by savages is nearer to Michelangelo's "Moses" than most of the statues in the annual Salons'. In Barcelona it particularly took the form of reviving old and popular Catalan music, which culminated in the foundation of the Orfeó Català and in the works of Morera. A common saying of the time was, 'The songs of the people are the songs of God'. The old tales of the countryside also attracted attention and affected such works as Senties's story of the Mad Woman illustrated by Picasso (see illus. 41). The puppet shows held in 'Els Quatre Gats', though ostensibly de signed to attract children, seem to have been taken very seriously by the regular customers, and the puppet was praised in Rousseau-like terms as 'man denuded of all conventions, with all the good instincts of a new-born animal'.

Picasso's Arte Joven shared this love of the child-like and primitive. One of the sonnets by Miguel de Unamuno selected for the first number begins: "I return to thee my childhood, as Antaeus returned to earth to regain his strength". In an item called 'Our Aesthetic' the quotation chosen from Goethe is: 'The true poet receives his knowledge of the world from nature, and to depict it he does not need great experience or great technique'. Already a writer on architecture had declared in Barcelona that learning and experience are less vital than spontaneity and instinct, and this feeling, no doubt, played a part in the current revival of Catalan Romanesque and Gothic art. All this is

certainly important for opening the way to Negro sculpture in Picasso's mind, and it may also have some bearing on the fact that there are at least sixteen works of 1901 by Picasso in which children figure, including the well-known 'L'Enfant au Pigeon', 'Le Gourmand' and the somewhat primitive 'La Soupe'.

First visit to Paris. 1900:

Picasso's immediate motive for visiting Paris in 1900 was probably the Universal Exhibition; his first visits lasted from October to Christmas 1900 and from April to December 1901. Almost at once his pictures became much brighter in colour and less literary in content, just as Van Gogh's had done some fourteen years earlier. Sabartés writes of 'the bright colours which blazed in his mind on discovering the lighting effects of the foot-lights and the coloured spot-lights used in cabaret performances'. This brightness was probably also due to the many Impressionist and Post-Impressionist pictures he was now able to see for the first time otherwise than in black-and-white reproductions or in the pastiches of Casas and Rusiñol. Many of his works also have Impressionist themes; there are studies of flowers, of streets in Montmartre, of the Boulevard de Clichy and of mothers with their children in public gardens (illus. 102). One may suppose that Picasso at this time was absorbed in digesting the intense new experiences afforded by Paris and its galleries, and we know from Sabartés that on his return to Barcelona he missed them. 'Naturally we went to the Salón Parés for there was no other exhibition to go to, but it seemed to us shallow when compared with our memories of Paris.'

During Picasso's early visits to Paris the paintings of the Nabis were much in evidence. But the snug petit bourgeois life which they depicted and their interest in the sensuous surface of the world and in the play of light had comparatively little attraction for Picasso. In a sense they could be called the Mannerists of Impressionism, content as they were to develop and play variations on old themes, while Picasso felt the need for a new art appropriate to the new century. It is significant that the literary contacts of the Nabis and the world of La Revue Blanche were somewhat archaising and looked back to the nineteenth century, whereas Picasso's poet friends Jacob, and later Apollinaire and Salmon were more revolutionary and had all learnt something from the violent novelties of Jarry. Picasso was not quite untouched by the work of Bonnard and his friends, and their influence is probably detectable in his treatment of such subjects as race-meetings and bull-fights and perhaps in 'Le Tub', but on the whole Picasso did not forget the world he had left behind him and paid more attention to painters of the sordid and disinherited, such as Lautrec, Gauguin and in 1901 Van Gogh.

Lautrec's well-known influence on Picasso has al ready been discussed. Reviewers of his exhibition at Vollard's in June 1901 accused him of imitating this artist and this criticism may be partly responsible for the emergence of a new, more personal style towards the end of 1901. Gauguin had more to offer—a revolt against the tyranny of naturalism in favour of 'le centre mystérieux de la pensée', a clear-cut style not too difficult to assimilate and a picturesque life which had made concrete the current aspirations towards savagery and primitivism. We know from Sabartés that Picasso and

his friends discussed Gauguin with excitement, that Picasso owned and drew in Noa Noa, and also that their friend the sculptor Paco Durio had been a friend and disciple of Gauguin and owned several of his paintings and wood-carvings, some from the Brittany period. Although Picasso's work is more obviously indebted to that of Gauguin in the Blue Period, in the idyllic classical phase of 1905 and in the trend towards the savage and primitive which followed, the heavy outlines of 'L'Enfant au Pigeon', 'Clown' and 'Arlequin Accoudé', all of 1901, have a Gauguinesque quality, as have several drawings of nude women crouched on the ground.

A large Daumier exhibition was held at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in 1901, extending to over 470 items, but this was not Picasso's first opportunity to see his work. He was represented in the Exposition Centennale of French Art in 1900 by thirty-five works, which included 'Saltimbanques', street-singers, laundresses and emigrants. Max Jacob had lithographs by Daumier which he gave to Picasso, and Manyac, Picasso's first dealer, sold some to Berthe Weill, who was his second. Picasso sketched a Daumier-like group of drunkards as early as 1900 and the similarity of Picasso's 'Les Fugitifs' to Daumier's 'Les Emigrants', which was shown at the big exhibition of 1901, is too great to be accidental (see illus. 97, 98). Daumier's strongly outlined, silhouetted figures, which almost give the effect of stained glass, may have contributed something to Picasso's style, and many of his subjects such as laundresses, mountebanks, mothers with sick children, spectators in a theatre and beggars occur in Picasso's work. It is hard to distinguish between Picasso's debts to Daumier and to Steinlen in his use of these themes, but the influence of the former is undeniable, and Picasso's tragic clowns and pierrots are likely to have been suggested by Daumier rather than by Cézanne's 'Mardi-Gras'.

Picasso has told Roland Penrose that in 1901 the influence of Van Gogh was greater upon him than that of any other painter. This is particularly interesting, since at that time Van Gogh's letters were practically unknown, his early works, which would have attracted Picasso by their subject-matter, were still in Holland, and even in 1902 Leo Stein, who had been introduced to the works of Cézanne by Berenson, had never heard of Van Gogh. Picasso, however, had probably been introduced to Van Gogh's art by Nonell and could have seen his works with Bernheim Jeune and Vollard. Both these dealers had tragic self-portraits of Van Gogh which might have provided the stimulus for Picasso's portrait of himself unshaven (see illus. 42). Some of Picasso's vigorous close-up portraits of this year, such as that of Gustave Coquiot, and a very un-idealised 'Femme nue étendue sur un lit' are rather like Van Gogh, especially in the hatching; the increased feeling of compassion towards the end of the year may also be connected with he Dutch master. Picasso seems to have agreed with Van Gogh that 'Les gens sont la racine de tout' and at this time and later in his career he concentrated even more exclusively than the Dutchman on works with human figures to the exclusion of landscape and still life.

Visit to Madrid and "Arte Joven". 1901:

It is characteristic of the violent changes in Picasso's art that almost immediately before the compassionate pictures of the Blue Period he should have produced some of his most sinister, cruel and satirical works. These first appeared in Madrid, where he went soon after Christmas 1900, having found perhaps that the older generation in Barcelona (Casas, Rusiñol and their friends) were still too firmly entrenched for his liking. In Madrid he was in contact with 'the generation of '98'— the group which included Baroja, Azorin and Rubén Darío—and with Francisco Soler, son of a man who made electric belts to cure all ailments, with whom he started his magazine Arte Joven, modelled on the Pel i Ploma of Casas. The cult of the primitive and the left- wing bias in Arte Joven have already been mentioned; they are characteristic of Catalan 'Modernismo', but in some ways the tone of the new magazine was more disabused and satirical than that of the world Picasso had left. Barcelona had been full of symbolism and rather naïve idealism—a mocker might have made short work of Bridgman's Cry of the Virgins or 'To be or not to be', which Picasso had apparently illustrated in all seriousness. Arte Joven, however, printed unsparing parodies of symbolism, and poems such as Alberto Lozano's in which he claims 'to deny authority to every thing and to mock at all theories ancient and modern'. (Illus. 54 is a drawing of Lozano by Picasso).

A cruel and satirical trend in Picasso's works har monises with the mood of his magazine. As Miguel Utrillo wrote of some of his pastels when they were shown at the Salón Parés in the following summer, 'II ne pardonna pas les faiblesses des gens'. The hideous profile of 'La Courtisane' (illus. 59) was painted at this time in Madrid, as was the leering little 'Dwarf Dancer' (illus. 48), where the harshness of the sentiment seems to accord with the strident colour. One can probably associate with these the somewhat malicious 'Au Restaurant' and 'La Vieille Femme Riant' and 'Bébé la Purée', with their touch of grotesque caricature and lively pointillist treatment. The drawings done in Madrid are even more disquieting—e.g. 'El Portal' (illus. 58) with its menacing woman who lurks in a doorway and the group of Picasso's friends who look like starving jackals in a bleak landscape (see illus. 53). One can only speculate as to whether this grimness came into Picasso's work from outside influences or whether Madrid and the editorship of Arte Joven gave him the chance to display what he had long felt. It is also possible that he may have been affected by some of the savage Goyas in the Prado, such as 'Saturn devouring his child' and 'A Witches Sabbath'. There had been a large Goya exhibition the previous year which would certainly have been a subject of discussion.

Picasso and Soler were at this time planning a book which never materialised called Madrid, to be modelled on Verhaeren's L'Espagne Noire, which had been translated into Spanish with wood-cuts and engravings by Darío de Regoyos (see illus. 56). Picasso must have studied this book carefully since he planned to imitate it, and some of its sombre Gothic mourning women in silhouette are not unlike figures of the Blue Period. Verhaeren and Regoyos were important links between Spain and the Dutch Symbolist movement, and because of such links, the similarities to be found between some of Toorop's drawings (cf. illus. 61) and Picasso's pictures may not be wholly fortuitous.

There is considerable difference of opinion about the significance for Picasso's development of his visit to Madrid and his contacts with the 'Gente del '98', whom he

met in the Café de Madrid. It is true that this circle differed from that of 'Els Quatre Gats'. Baroja, for example, wrote picturesque novels about tramps, which have been compared with those of Gorki, and they may conceivably have been one of the many strands of humanitarianism in the genesis of the Blue Period at the end of the year. But the Madrid influence should not be exaggerated; Picasso stayed there for less than two months and did not return for any substantial period. In spite of the difference of tone mentioned above, Arte Joven was primarily concerned with bringing

Catalan 'Modernismo' to Madrid; it published a letter of Ramón Reventós to the Madrid intellectuals, a panegyric of Rusiñol, and advertisements for 'Els Quatre Gats'. But the independence implied in being his own editor and the comparative isolation of life in Madrid may have quickened Picasso's development, for not long after his return to Paris, in April of 1901, Picasso painted three pictures with a more personal and original subject-matter than the cafés, bull-fights and music halls which had previously interested him.

These pictures—'Le Mort', 'The Burial of Casagemas' (now often called 'L'Evocation'), and 'Les Fugitifs' (see illus. 97)—are significant both stylistically and because they break away from the narrow subject-matter of Impressionism without having recourse to the literary fancifulness of Odilon Redon or Puvis de Chavannes. Unlike Monet or Pissarro, who lived to castigate as reactionary the irrealism of Gauguin's followers and the Symbolists, Picasso in later life did not shrink from painting mythologies—classical, baroque or personal. The mythology of 'Le Mort' and 'The Burial of Casagemas' is personal and immediate, based on the tragedy of his friend's suicide; yet these pictures also belong to that large class of general, semi-abstract and allegorical subjects such as Ferdinand Hodler's 'Night', Toorop, the Dutch Symbolist's 'Anarchy' and Edvard Munch's 'Frieze of Life,' which were being painted towards the turn of the century. Picasso may or may not have known these works but he was impelled in the same direction by the climate of the times. (The following year he complained in a letter to Max Jacob from Barcelona that his work was being criticised for showing 'trop d'âme' and 'pas de forme', a charge which was levelled with perhaps more reason against the early German Expressionists.) Picasso made several studies for 'L'Evocation' (e.g. that in illus. 101), and this, together with the fact that it was prominently displayed in his room on the Boulevard de Clichy, suggests that it not only marked a stylistic change towards a more massive and sculptural treatment of form, but was perhaps the earliest of those more deliberate and ambitious works such as 'La Vie' (1903), 'Les Saltimbanques' (1905) and 'Les Demoiselles d'Avignon' (1907) which seem to crystallise or fore shadow the exploration of several years.

'Le Mort' shows the friends of Casagemas mourning over his body, vague, timeless figures, not treated realistically, with a naked child set amongst them. The theme, style and composition of 'Le Mort' were developed in the larger, more mysterious 'Evocation' which is perhaps an evocation of the dead man's life treated as the modern version of an El Greco burial. Balanced in the swirling and turbulent sky, instead of Christ and Saints, are figures who had probably been the companions of Casagemas' life as they were certainly to be those of Picasso's art during the next few years. On the left two prostitutes gaze upwards at a plunging horse; they are naked except that one wears blue, the other red stockings. Balancing them on the right two nude,

Cézannesque women gravely indicate the dead man and the mourners on the ground below. Surprisingly, their bodies, particularly in the schematised treatment of their stomachs, are painted almost in the simplified blocks usually associated with Picasso's art just before Cubism in 1906. Some of the brushwork, particularly at the bottom of the picture, is also like that of Cézanne, and the whole work has a flavour of this painter's early erotic and allegorical pictures, such as 'L'Orgie', 'L'Après- Midi à Naples' and 'L'Etemel Féminin'. The first of these Picasso could certainly have seen at this time, since it belonged to Vollard the picture-dealer, and it is possible that he knew others. Between the two groups of nudes, which may represent venal and true, sacred and profane love, walks a mother with her child, anticipating the cloaked 'Maternités' of the Blue Period, except that two children in gay, light-coloured clothes seem to be tugging or urging her forwards. Two mourning women on the ground embrace, recalling in their pose some of the many studies of lovers made by Picasso both before and after this time (see illus. 85). Above them all, a woman has flung her arms round the dark rider on the Redon-like horse, whose own outspread arms may express both resignation and impotence. If Picasso had seen any early versions of Redon's 'Phaeton' (cf. illus. 99) or remembered this legend, he may have been implying that Casagemas, who was both painter and writer, had tried to drive the horses of the Sun and had been held back by a woman. Alternatively Casagemas, who had apparently killed himself because he was in love and impotent, may be dreaming in death that he is riding away on this powerful animal.

In 1901 Picasso was still spending most of his time with Spanish friends, with de Soto (see illus. 143), with Sabartés, later his secretary and biographer, with the sculptor Manolo, and with Manyac who bought and sold his pictures; but during this summer just before the Blue Period he met Max Jacob who had gone as an art-critic to the first Vollard exhibition of his work. Max Jacob was born in Quimper, Brittany, in 1876, the son of a Jewish tailor and antique dealer. After a miserable, sometimes suicidal childhood he came to Paris about 1894 and made a precarious living as a secretary, by teaching the piano, by selling in a shop, by looking after children and as art-critic for Le Moniteur des Arts. Both Picasso and Jacob were ironists, melancholy jesters with a great love of nonsense and a taste for what was disquieting. (Fernande Olivier, Picasso's companion from 1905-12, writes that 'son instinct le poussait vers tout ce qui est tourmenté'.) Max was known for his parodies, miming and buffoonery, which were so habitual with him that years later he could not even suppress them at the funeral of Picasso's mistress, Marcelle Humbert, where they were, rather naturally, considered offensive. The friendship between the two men, which developed rapidly, soon overcame the difficulties of language, and by 1902 Picasso was writing from Barcelona to Max in affectionate terms and passable French. Just before that they had shared a room on the Boulevard de Clichy, where one slept by night, the other by day.

Jacob was extremely well-read, and it seems likely that he first seriously directed Picasso's attention to the gods of modern French literature, to Baudelaire, Verlaine and Rimbaud, whose writings Picasso had probably only known in the slightly watered-down translations of Guanyavents which were current in Barcelona. In these early years one catches a glimpse of him excitedly read ing Verlaine aloud at a time when Picasso had no other room to go to even if he had wished—though Fernande, writing of the year 1905 or later, said that they all listened entranced when Max read to them.

Henceforth the heritage of the Symbolists and their whole legend and example were part of the climate which Picasso breathed. 'La Bande à Picasso' wished neither to deny Symbolism nor to imitate it. Salmon has well described this ambivalence as a father-child relationship. 'Ils furent à leurs aînés Symbolistes les fils heureusement ingrats qu'à d'autres avaient été les Symbolistes.' Just as the Parnassian poets, Flaubert, Courbet—and later Degas and Manet—took much from the Romantics, even while deriding their subjectivity and habit of vague idealisation, so Max Jacob, Apollinaire, Picasso and André Salmon wrote, painted and published parodies of the Symbolists' work, yet rallied to their defence when they were attacked by the new movements, such as the 'Foi Nouvelle' group, led by rather priggish young poets who complained that Symbolism had been unhealthy and too much pre-occupied with the singular and morbid.

Nevertheless Picasso and his French literary friends, of whom Jacob was the first, felt that they were living in a heroic, if macabre, age of infinite possibilities which demanded a newer art, more dynamic than fin-de- siècle Symbolism, to match the other great developments of the time in science and engineering. This feeling must have confirmed Picasso's temperamental daring and all that he had learnt from Catalan 'Modernismo', from anarchism and from Nietzsche about the need for un hindered self-expression, for scorning the bourgeois and voyaging forth into the unknown. Max Jacob was gentler and less self-confident than Picasso who, judging from the chronology of their work, dominated his older friend artistically as he did emotionally. So, for instance, on one occasion when Picasso returned from Spain to find Jacob capitulating to the rites of bourgeois re spectability he said sternly: 'Live like the poets'. They certainly discussed poetry and painting, however, for Max was also a painter in gouache and water-colour and used any objects he could find round him as materials, and it is likely that their outlook and methods reacted on each other.

Both Picasso and Max Jacob are reported to have found Huysmans's Des Esseintes very decadent, and their art and lives were wholly unlike the private and dedicated perfectionism of Mallarmé and the cerebral pessimism of Laforgue. They had more humour than the Symbolists, and were willing to be part of the absurdity they depicted. Picasso's caricatures of his friends, his nonsense-sagas of Junyer Vidal's encounter with Durand-Ruel or his fantasies about Majorca are paralleled by the genial blasphemies of Jacob's drunken sailor:

'C'est moi, c'est moi qui suis Moïse

Venez à la Terre promise

Rien à payer pour le passage.

Venez car c'est votre avantage

Tous les tunnels de la mer

Rouge Je les perçerai de ma gouge'.

and the satirical nonsense of

'A vendre: quatre véritables déserts

à proximité du chemin de fer

s’adresser au propriétaire-notaire’.

Jacob is here taking the paradoxical subject-matter of modern life for his province in a way that the serious, detached and introspective Symbolists had rarely attempted, although Baudelaire had sometimes practised and often recommended it. Picasso frequently combined the new and the remote ; his ‘Les Deux Sœurs’ of 1902, for example (see illus. 109), recalls the Gothic sculpture of Chartres, yet the two figures were taken from a nun and a whore in the hospital of Saint-Lazare, as he himself wrote to Max Jacob. Guillaume Apollinaire said of Picasso’s pictures in 1905 that ‘Under the gaudy tinsel of his slender acrobats one can discern the young men of the people, versatile, cunning, skilful, poverty-stricken and lying’. Apollinaire himself, whom Picasso did not meet until the beginning of 1905, was already fascinated by modem city-life, by aeroplanes, hooting sirens and the whole apparatus of modern warfare. Although he came to write ‘Tu en a assez de vivre dans l’antiquité grecque et romaine’, in these early years just before and after he met Picasso, he was using the traditional lyrical forms of Villon and Heine to combine the old and new:

‘Que tombent ces vagues de brique

Si tu ne fus pas bien aimée

Je suis le souverain d’Egypte

Sa sœur-épouse son armée

Si tu n’es pas l’amour unique

Soirs de Paris ivres du gin

Flambant de l’électricité

Les tram-ways feux verts sur l’échine

Musiquent au long des portées

De rails leur folie de machines’

This taste for what was immediate, for the plunge into experience rather than for fastidious detachment, made Rimbaud the favourite Symbolist of Picasso and his friends, and was probably responsible for the drunken war-cry ‘Down with Laforgue! Up with Rimbaud’, which is reported both by Jacob and Fernande Olivier. Presumably they found Laforgue too cerebral and disliked his spiritual defeatism and pessimism. He was a civilised and sceptical onlooker, like Eliot’s Prufrock wondering:

‘Do I dare disturb the universe?’

Rimbaud, Apollinaire and Picasso emphatically did dare, and none of them would have described themselves as a decadent in the sense in which Laforgue applied the word to himself. It was characteristic of the gentler Max that he admired Verlaine while Picasso said, ‘Il n’y a pas de poètes. Rimbaud est le seul’.

Picasso’s love of the primitive and the naïve which appeared in Arte Joven, in ’La Soupe’ and eventually in his enthusiasm for the Douanier Rousseau and Negro art, found a counterpart in Jacob. Max used popular songs and ballads and decorated the walls of his room with ‘Images d’Epinal’. His two earliest books, published in 1904,

were written for children; some of his early poems are headed 'Pour les enfants et pour les raffinés' and have the same kind of mannered innocence and sophisticated simplicity as can be found in some of Picasso's drawings. At this time Max Jacob's employer had just organised a vast exhibition at the Petit Palais called 'L'Enfant à travers les âges'. One can only speculate as to whether Picasso's many contemporary pictures of children, which include 'Le Gourmand', 'Intimité' and 'L'Enfant au Pigeon', owe anything to this. L. C. Breunig has suggested that some of Picasso's little caricatures and satirical drawings of these years were influenced by Max Jacob, adducing the fact that a portrait of Paul Fort is signed by them both.

Like Picasso and Apollinaire, Max Jacob often gave free rein to and even courted his unconscious, while retaining at the same time a respect for construction, composition and deliberate art which distinguishes him entirely from the Dadaists and Surrealists. It was not for nothing that he later wrote an Art Poétique or that the Cubists' studios were hung with reproductions of Seurat while they spoke often of 'le vrai'. In the period of the Fauves who sacrificed form to colour they felt the need for more austerity and atticism. The works of Jacob and Picasso were to take a parallel course away from Symbolism and romantic sentimentality towards a more impersonal style in which, as Jacob wrote in L'art Poétique, 'The subject has no importance and the picturesque none either'.

But all this was far ahead in the years 1901-3 when the taste for everything Nordic and mediaeval was almost as strong in Paris as it had been in Barcelona. The young French intellectuals were raving about Pelléas et Mélisande, Jacob wrote on the work of James Ensor and was also interested in Hoffmann and Poe, while at the same time Huysmans produced studies of Grünewald and the Master of Flémalle. Perhaps most interesting of all was the Gothicism of Apollinaire's review Le Festin d'Esope, because both he and André Salmon, who was much concerned with it, were soon to be Picasso's close friends.

Le Festin, in this respect very different from Salmon's Vers et Prose published two years later, made a great feature of Gothic stories and effects reminiscent of Grand Guignol, as when in a mediaeval tale by Apollinaire a man put his vanquished opponent's arm in his pocket. Apollinaire's L'Enchanteur Pourrissant, which tells of the Arthurian wizard Merlin and the enchantress Vivian, owes much to the legends of the Ardennes, where he had stayed at a formative time in his youth and had been greatly attracted by the Germanic scenery, the mists and forests. In 1901 Apollinaire had taken a tutorial job which involved considerable travelling in Germany, and it was then that he wrote most of the poems grouped under the title Rhénanes in Alcools, poems which have German subjects and perhaps a certain German grossness and sentimentality, but some times too that authentic German pathos which can be found in old German ballads and the songs of Wolf:

'J'aicueilli ce brin de bruyère

L'automne est morte souviens-t'en

Nous ne nous verrons plus sur terre

Odeur du temps brin de bruyère

Et souviens-toi que je t'attends'.

André Salmon, who had lived for a while in Russia, a country affected by the Decadence, was born in the same year as Picasso and seems to have passed through comparable stages. His poems in Le Festin d'Esope made use of the same characters as those of Picasso's Blue Period —harlequins, blind beggars, madmen and starving mothers. One of his poems, Féerie, could equally well have been written in fin-de-siècle Barcelona; it tells of a mad or enchanted girl who escapes by night to dance in the forest with a band of 'mauvais héros' including de Sade, Don Juan and Nostradamus; they are all waited on by a monkey. Another, La Rue, has all the properties of the Blue Period—the old blind violinist, a cripple caressing a blind dog, pallid mothers suckling their babies and, above all, the angry and compassionate climax:

'Et l'on bâtit toujours des demeures trop vastes

Où l'on souffrira tous les amours à l'étroit

Arrachez l'oriflamme et plantez sur le toit

Les entrailles des affamés de notre race!'

Like all the other reviews run by the young Picasso and his friends, Le Festin d'Esope was anarchist and bourgeois-baiting. It published a satire called 'How to be applauded by the bourgeois' and a condemned anarchist's account of how he had shot a member of this despised class. There is also a poem inspired by the American song 'Poor Lily Dale', the heroine of which sounds like a sister of many Blue Period women:

'Lily fûtes-vous un bar-maid poétique

Dans un vieux bar de l'est bleu de fumée

Où l'ivrognerie était douce et romantique

Où des loups de mer et des gamins pâles vous

aimaient?'

Le Festin had an obsession with death worthy of Barcelona and the usual translations from the German and articles on Nietzsche.

The Blue Period. "La Vie":

The Blue Period, the time when Picasso first evolved a manner of his own, can be seen as a visual counter part to the Gothicism of the young Jacob, Salmon and Apollinaire and to the fin-de-siècle poetry of Rusiñol and Maragall. It is also a Franco-Spanish parallel to the German Expressionist movement, each owing much to Gauguin but not, perhaps, very closely connected with

the other. Picasso seems to have made a synthesis of a sort of Gothic Expressionism with a certain measure of contemporary realism and compassion for the unfortunate. It is thus an early revelation of the compassionate Picasso, who was later to write, 'How would it be possible to feel no interest in other people and by virtue of an ivory indifference to detach yourself from the life which they so copiously bring you?' The subject of the Blue Period is often the life of the artist as a Bohemian and an outcast, a

man apart, symbolised by the lonely figures of pierrots and beggars. It was the life Picasso was leading himself, poor and separated from his family in Barcelona, but the theme also owes much to the nineties when the idea of the artist as l'homme maudit, unhappy and divorced from ordinary life but superior to it, was developed in England, France, Spain and elsewhere. Picasso said that art emanates from pain and sadness, just as in 1903 Apollinaire voiced 'Regrets sur quoi l'enfer se fonde' and Sabartés wrote that 'sincerity cannot be found outside the realm of grief'. One is reminded again of Rusiñol's discourse at Sitges, exhorting his fellow artists to depict the extreme sorrows and calvaries of the earth, or of Picasso's friend Junyent's praise of modem art for dealing with the dis equilibrium of human faculties and the sad visions of anguished souls. As Roger Shattuck has written, the 1900s 'acknowledged the vitality of certain areas conventionally called evil and lunatic'.

In composition and style Picasso did not immediately follow up the pictures with many figures and ambitious subject-matter such as 'The Burial of Casagemas', but returned to compositions with one or two figures, a habit which reflects his simplifying tendency as he moved to wards the Blue Period. He seems also to have abandoned his experiments in the Cézanne-like treatment of form in favour of a compassion reminiscent of Van Gogh, expressed in the heavy, simplified outlines of Gauguin (e.g. 'L'Enfant au Pigeon', 'Arlequin Accoudé' and 'Le Bock').

We have already seen that Picasso and his friends discussed Gauguin's work with excitement and that they also knew Paco Durio, who had shared Gauguin's poverty in Montmartre and owned several wood-cuts and pots of the Brittany period. It was probably under Gauguin's influence that Picasso gave up the rich variety of his brush-stroke, which in his earlier works had sometimes been slight and delicate, sometimes heavy and supplemented with the use of a palette knife. Instead he now used a consistently fine touch and a flatter surface, and abandoned the virtuoso pointillism of the period exemplified by 'The Dwarf Dancer' (illus. 48) in favour of more even colouring. The forms became heavier and were expressed in large, unbroken masses (cf. illus. 72), while the volumes are emphasised by the heavy outlines. The colour became increasingly limited, and the subject-matter changed from one of considerable variety —cabarets, bull-fights, race-courses, flowers, street- scenes—to a single kind of theme with strange, unhappy figures, solitary and immobile, heroic in size but mis-erable in circumstance, at first hunched over a café table, later more frequently crouching on the ground, and always treated with more compassion than the harshly-realised courtesans which he had painted in earlier years. It is significant that, whereas Bonnard, Vuillard and even Carrière set their figures in pretty bourgeois rooms of the period, Picasso's men and women inhabit the no man's land of cafés, too apathetic, too homeless or too preoccupied to move. They are the eternal outcasts from ordinary life, and this bare setting serves to give them the timeless quality which Picasso intended. Where as Bonnard and Vuillard depict the Parisian bourgeoisie of the late nineties, Picasso, in this more like Daumier or even Bunyan, shows man in the abstract confronting his destiny.

Sabartés has called the Blue Period 'a testimony of conscience' and certainly the change in his friend's work showed courage. In spite of some criticisms the exhibition at Vollard's had been a success; the notices on the whole had been favourable, and

Picasso was specially praised for his flower-pieces and his bright colours, and it was precisely these which he now abandoned. The result was a complete failure from the financial point of view. After a year of painting in his new style, Picasso was unable to sell the whole contents of his studio for the price of a ticket back to Spain. This volte-face was, however, in the best tradition of contemporary Spanish intransigence and in conformity with Nietzsche's scorn for bourgeois values. Although the first works of the Blue Period were actually created in Paris and owe much to Gauguin, Van Gogh, Carrière and Maurice Denis, the roots of the style are essentially Spanish, and Picas so's hungry figures crouched over their scanty meals derive much from his own experience of poverty and from what he had seen of peasant life when living in Horta de San Juan with his friend Pallares (after an ill ness) when he was sixteen years old.

When Picasso went back to Barcelona at the end of 1901 after his eight months' absence in Paris, the emotional climate was still much what it was before he left. There was still the same exaltation of spirit at the expense of matter, Wagner's operas were still being performed to excited audiences, the works of Edgar Allan Poe and Rossetti (whose interest in emaciated and sickly women rivalled Picasso's) were appearing in translation, and the cult of Nietzsche and 'le moi' was still widespread. Only perhaps in some pictures of Torres Garcia (see illus. 168) and in the magazine Forma, which succeeded Pel i Ploma, were there faint hints of the classicism to come, hints that the days of the Decadence were numbered and that, as in France and England, men had become surfeited with Nordic languor, gloom and cloudiness and were ready to react—in England with the cheerful conformity of 'week-end' poetry and the barrack-room ballads, in France and Spain with a demand for discipline and a return to Mediterranean values.

The almost exclusive use of blue in Picasso's work at this time has never been satisfactorily explained. It has been attributed to accidental circumstances—to the fact that Picasso was too poor to buy other colours and to his habit of working at night by lamplight—and to psychological causes (Jung regarded it as evidence of in cipient schizophrenia). Its origin is certainly more complex than this and connected with the artistic aims which Picasso was pursuing at this time. Blue was a favourite colour, rich in associations, with both the Romantics and the Decadents. For the Romantics it was linked with the idea of mystery, of night and of love, while for the Decadents there was added the connotation of evil, and both ideas were familiar in Barcelona and Paris at the turn of the century.

The Blue Flower of the German Romantic Novalis was well-known in Barcelona through the medium of Maragall's translation. For him the blue of the night was the symbol of a higher existence fusing death with love: 'the higher world is nearer to us than we are accustomed to think'. The phrase 'des contes bleus', commonly employed in the nineteenth century to describe romantic stories, is used in this sense by Apollinaire in 1903. It has also been suggested that Picasso's blue is a reminiscence of Mallarmé's Azur and Verlaine's phrase 'Pas de couleur, rien que la nuance'. One of the Catalan poets of the nineties, Ruben Dario, published a book called Azul and a preference for misty twilight effects or scenes 'au clair de la lune' are characteristic of the works of Rusiñol and Surinach Sentiés, who wrote The Mad Woman, illustrated by Picasso.

Blue was also much used by painters who might have influenced Picasso at this period: Cézanne in his late works and Whistler who was much admired in Barcelona since the painting of his 'Valparaiso Nocturnes'. Originally naturalistic, Whistler's blues became a symbol for dusk, for mystery, for the time when 'the poor buildings lose themselves in the dim sky and the tall chimneys become campaniles'. Blue was also used by Walter Greaves and Burne-Jones, by Maitland in his London scenes and by Steer and Conder in their pictures of the sea-side. The English aesthetes, especially Wilde, were obsessed by the word turquoise.

Behind all these ideas lie the general associations of blue with the infinity of sky and sea, and there may be need of nothing more to explain Picasso's use of it than his later words quoted by Roland Penrose: 'You are that which exists best in the world . . . the colour of all colours, the bluest of all blues.' The use of monochrome also serves to remove the figures from the everyday world and to set them in an indeterminate region where they become suffering souls rather than individual laundresses and acrobats.

Although the atmosphere of the Blue Period is predominantly sad, there are humorous portraits, and at least one group-picture (of the Soler family) which has something of the cheerful naïveté often associated with the Douanier Rousseau, whom Picasso had not yet encountered. The periods into which we attempt to codify or entrap Picasso's ebullient and soaring variety have some validity and convenience for study, but we should never neglect the under-tow of opposing currents. Like Apollinaire, Picasso had some Mediterranean and classical leanings even when the general bent of his work was Romantic, northern and gloomy (see illus. 146).

Most of the characteristic themes of the Blue Period are illustrated in the plates, but some of the more persistent and interesting subjects demand comment. A recurrent theme in the early part of this time is that of Mother and Child. It was not a novel idea, for the nineteenth century had a tradition of secularised Madonnas or 'Maternités' which are to be found in the works of painters as different as Daumier, Renoir or the Dutch Symbolist Toorop, as well as in Carrière and Maurice Denis. Picasso did more than eight 'Maternités', not counting drawings, in late 1901 and 1902. Their style varies but most of them have some features in common with certain types of Gothic art, for instance the simplified form of the draperies and the continuous line of nose and brow (cf. illus. 106). Except for 'Le Mort' and 'The Burial of Casagemas' this is the first time that Picasso gives his figures vaguely mediaeval clothes instead of contemporary dress. Moreover, some of the backgrounds in the pictures are divided into horizontal bands of sea, beach and sky which are comparable with the colour zones frequent in Romanesque murals which Picasso could have seen. Mediaeval art was not unknown in Barcelona at this time; Pel i Ploma published several articles on the subject, Picasso's friend Miguel Utrillo was enthusiastic about it and the artist may have been influenced by Ruskin, who was translated into Catalan and often mentioned in the periodicals of Barcelona. The almost religious feeling in the 'Maternités' of this period may be connected with this interest in mediaeval art but may also be accounted for by the influence of El Greco, whose work Picasso had greatly admired on his visit to Toledo in 1901.

The influence of Maurice Denis must have strengthened these tendencies. His aim was to infuse new life into religious painting by injecting a dose of Intimism into it. Denis had been much affected by Gauguin, by mediaeval tapestries and, after a visit to Italy in 1895, by the art of the Italian Quattrocento. Like Gauguin, he believed in synthesis and simplifying, in submitting each picture to a single rhythm, a principle which Picasso seems to be applying in some of his 'Maternités'. There is a sentimental languor in both Denis's work and Picasso's pictures of this time, a feeling of spirituality denying matter, the nearest literary equivalent of which was perhaps Verlaine's La Bonne Chanson. We have seen also that, perhaps originally through his friend Junyent, Picasso came to know the works of Eugène Carrière, a Socialist and a Dreyfusard, who tried to mix with the workers in projects for new, popular universities and who painted many 'Maternités'. The sentiment in many of his paintings of this kind is close to that of Picasso's Blue Period groups and his 'Caresse d'Enfant' o f 1901 has the very long fingers associated with these paintings. The 'Maternités' explain Picasso's later reaction towards a more robust and impersonal art which made him say to Zervos of his early work, 'Tout cela c'est du sentiment'.

The key picture of 1903, and perhaps of the whole Blue Period, is 'La Vie' (see illus. 115) ; interesting for the ideas behind it and the grandeur with which they are presented. 'La Vie' still seems to connect Picasso with the world of Maeterlinck and fin-de-siècle symbolism rather than with the more forthright, affirmative and contemporary images of Apollinaire's Chanson du Mal-Aimé, written in the same year, two verses of which have been quoted above. There is a sense of deep melancholy in this picture, but the situation of romantic love is always fraught with danger. It is not only the art of the Decadents, or Gauguin's "D'où venons nous? Que sommes nous? Où allons-nous?" which expresses this feeling; it goes back at least to Chaucer's

'What is this worlde? What asketh men to have?

Now with his love now in his colde grave

Alone withouten anie companie.'

If, as seems likely, the older woman represents a more ominous time in the young woman's life, 'La Vie' probably alludes to the old theme of 'The Three Ages of Man' and particularly to its late nineteenth-century version, which took the form of Cycles of Life. It is a strange coincidence, if it is a coincidence, that only the year before, in 1902, Munch had painted 'Three Stages of a Woman's Life' (see illus. 46) which he had already executed as a lithograph in 1899. In his frieze 'The Dance of Life' Munch also depicts an innocent girl looking on at the dance, a woman dancing intently with a man, and finally a woman in black, again looking on. The Dutch Symbolist Toorop had painted an allegory, 'Three Brides', where a normal, innocent bride is shown between one who is fiendish and sensual and another who is chaste and nun-like. Similar subjects were also painted in Germany, for instance by Klinger and Klimt, who also called his work 'Three Stages of Life'. Nevertheless it is strange that as late as 1903 the adventurous Picasso should choose to paint an important picture in this old allegorical tradition, used so often by Watts and the Swiss Bôcklin.

Perhaps the most expressive pictures of the Blue Period are those painted between Picasso's return to Barcelona at the beginning of 1903 and his departure in April 1904,

such as ‘Le Vieux Juif’ and ‘Le Repas de l’Aveugle’, which must owe something to El Greco. Picasso knew his work before going to Toledo in 1901 (see illus. 51), but after this visit his enthusiasm increased. There had already been a revival of interest in Greco, who was soon to be the ‘patron saint of Expressionism’, culminating in the Fiesta Modernista at Sitges in 1897, when two of his pictures were carried in procession and a monument was erected to him. This revival, in which Picasso’s friends Casas and Utrillo took part, arose out of the mediaevalising literary movement of the fin-de-siècle with its anti-classicism and cult of spirituality and pain, which naturally found El Greco’s ascetic art congenial. In El Greco’s works Picasso seems to have found encouragement for his distortions, particularly for his use of emaciated legs, fine fingers, and elongated faces, and for cold colours and chalky lights, features also to be found in many of the artists now called ‘Mannerist’, in whom Picasso later showed an interest (see illus. 128, 129).

The preponderance of blind beggars is a striking feature of the work of these years, but this is not sur prising, for there are a great many blind beggars in Spain and these figures would have struck Picasso forcibly, since the loss of sight is often the most dreaded state of a painter. His ‘Blind Clown’ is perhaps the dreaded opposite of his own skill and wonderful vision, for the traditional role of the clown is to fail clumsily in all that he undertakes, following his ancestors the foolish stooges of Greek and Roman mime. The theme of beggars is a fairly common one in Spanish painting and, as we have seen, had been revived by Nonell and the writers of the fin-de-siècle. It may also owe some thing to the novels of Baroja and even to Gorki. The works of the latter had been translated into French and were well-known at this time, and Picasso was certainly aware of contemporary Russian literature, since an inscription on one of his drawings refers to Turgeniev.

The first signs of a break in the Blue Period appear in a change of mood and treatment apparent in some works of 1904. In the ‘Woman Ironing’, for instance, the figures are given more movement, although there is still a great concentration on masses. The ‘Actor’ (1904-5 ; see illus. 139) is a more transitional work; here the monochrome blue is disappearing and the concentrated, compact forms, tied together with a closed outline, give way to a more sinuous treatment of the arms and torso. In this and in the works showing a man who watches a sleeping woman, the apathy and immobility of Picasso’s figures, due to their intense hunger and despair, is gradually replaced by a graceful melancholy. The starving Mothers and Children become idyllic Holy Families (see illus. 131).

Harlequins and Clowns:

The theme of pierrots, harlequins and clowns is not confined to any one period of Picasso’s early life. Two pictures—one of a clown, the other of a pierrot with thick Gauguinesque outlines—herald the Blue Period, others appear during the Blue Period itself, but they become much more numerous in 1905, at a time when Picasso and his friends were frequently visiting the Cirque Médrano. Their significance in Picasso’s work and in the art and literature of the time can be given many explanations.

Professor Meyer Schapiro has suggested that the tendency in the later nineteenth century to represent spectacles and theatrical performances is connected with the painter's preoccupation with his own art at a time when the cult of 'Art for Art's sake' sometimes replaced orthodox religious feelings. The skill of the acrobat or ballet dancer symbolises the discipline and struggle with his material experienced by the painter himself. It is true that Degas's description of the ballet-dancer might be an unconscious self-portrait:

'En vous la danse a mis quelque chose d'à part

Héroïque et lointain',

but this is probably not the invariable motive for depicting such spectacles in a period when it was customary for the painter to seek his subjects in the life around him. Ballet dancers, acrobats and pierrots were thus permissible subjects, and yet were surrounded by the poetical and magical atmosphere, the ritual and the heightened sense of life which artists needed now that they were starved of religious and mythological subjects.

But these entertainers also symbolise the lonely, nomadic and questing life of Picasso himself, for at least one of these harlequins is given the artist's features (see illus. 137). (The various characters from the Commedia dell'Arte to some extent grew out of and blended into each other, and Picasso's figures of this kind, particularly harlequin and pierrot, do not seem very sharply differentiated.) The harlequins of Picasso, who are not at first shown practising their art in action but crouched in melancholy over café tables, embody not so much the skill and painful discipline of art as the exalted loneliness of the outsider which entertainer and painter had in common. The clothes of Harlequin, like the colour blue, tend to remove him from the world of reality; they set him outside the normal life depicted by artists interested in social documentation and link him with a more mysterious and generalised order of being having its own mystique and ritual.

As such they appear a great deal in the literature of the late nineteenth century and that written by Picasso's friends. Ever since the time of the great Jean-Gaspard Deburau, Pierrot, who had been a kind of anonymous zany, lost his clownish buffoon-like traits and took on a more melancholy, profound and Hamlet-like nature; he came to embody the writer or artist as onlooker and to express the sorrow lurking behind the entertainer's mask. Like Picasso André Salmon explicitly identifies himself with harlequins when he writes in a poem published in 1905:

'Je suis le baladin qui danse sur la corde

Heureux de son vertige et de ses oripeaux'.

Huysmans, Banville, and Baudelaire in his prose-poem Le Vieux Saltimbanque all wrote about pierrots, and the whole company of columbines, harlequins and so on appear in Verlaine's poetry, a volume of which Picasso owned. In Les Complaintes de Lord Pierrot Laforgue saw himself as a pierrot manqué, a kind of sceptical dandy, blagueur and ironical. Beardsley's designs for Ernest Dowson's The Pierrot of the Minute belong to the same world, and Yeats, who appeared in French translation in Salmon's Vers et Prose, wrote poems about sad jesters. At least two poems in Apollinaire's Alcools make use of this theme:

‘Sur les tréteaux l’arlequin blême

Salue d’abord les spectateurs

Des sorciers venus de Bohême

Quelques fées et les enchanteurs’,

and he also uses circus metaphors:

‘L’amour lourd comme un ours privé

Dansa debout quand nous voulûmes’.

Carco reports that there was a popular song in Montmartre at this time about a hanged pierrot. Cézanne’s picture ‘Le Mardi Gras’, with his son in the costume of a harlequin, was exhibited in the Salon d’Automne of 1904, but it seems likely that Picasso’s gayer, more intimate pictures of circus family life dating from 1905 were painted because, as Carco says, at this time ‘la bande à Picasso’ went to the circus as regularly as others attended the Académie Julian.

Guillaume Apollinaire and Gertrude Stein:

Towards 1905 Picasso’s art gradually became less anguished, more classical and serene. The comparative cheerfulness of this time, generally called the Rose or Circus Period, is probably connected with the fact that it was then that Picasso met three people who were all very important for the development of his art—Fernande Olivier, Guillaume Apollinaire and Gertrude Stein, a group which, as Miss Stein wrote, ‘égaya la solennité espagnole’. The effect of his new companion, Fernande Olivier, whom he first met fetching water from the only tap in the tumbled-down building which Max called ‘le bateau-lavoir', is too intangible for analysis, but to judge from her own reminiscences, living with this spirited, buoyant and Junoesque girl may well have made Picasso less melancholy.

As a critic Apollinaire, in Shattuck’s words, ‘helped to detach the new century from the old’; he was a great animator and impresario who gave artistic confidence to others besides Picasso, to Mac Orlan and Max Jacob, who described the first occasion on which Picasso took him to meet his new friend:‘With out stopping a quiet but violent discourse on Nero... he rose, swept us out into the night with great shouts of laughter, and so began the most wonderful days of my life.’ Apollinaire was an extremely appropriate friend for Picasso. They were both high-spirited, anarchist and freedom-loving; both had a knowledge of tradition in their respective arts without inhibitions to constrain them from experiment. (Apollinaire said, ‘One cannot always be carrying one’s dead father’s body about. It must be left to the company of the other dead.’) Both of them were outsiders in love with Paris, both had been influenced by northern and German art, Apollinaire in his poems called Rhénanes and in the review Le Festin d’Esope, Picasso in such works as his Gothic ‘Maternités’; both had been soaked in a Symbolist atmosphere but were moving away from it. But in spite of Apollinaire’s Chanson du Mal-Aimé of 1903, which is already too direct, concrete and modern in imagery to be considered as a Symbolist poem, neither Apollinaire nor Picasso was yet

using revolutionary or esoteric styles; their work gives an impression of calculated simplicity. Apollinaire's language was bare and perhaps owed something to Ronsard and La Fontaine; thirty out of fifty poems in Alcools were written in regular metre. It is significant that one of his most restrained and classical works. Le Bestiaire, was apparently first planned about 1906 to be illustrated by Picasso, although it eventually appeared with illustrations by Dufy. Apollinaire's classical leanings can be seen in the terms which he used to praise Matisse in La Phalange of 1907, 'the equilibrium of your reasonable art... the most tender qualities of France, her simplicity, her serenity and clarity'. During the period 1905-6 Picasso and Apollinaire both used the theme of Salome in a way that was simple, classical and innocent in comparison with the perversity Beardsley had extracted from the subject or with the hothouse atmosphere of Strauss's contemporary opera.

'Pour que sourie encore une fois Jean-Baptiste

Sire je danserais mieux que les séraphins

Ma mère dites-moi pourquoi vous êtes triste

En robe de comtesse à côté du Dauphin'.

Apollinaire's importance for Picasso—and how much he was in Picasso's thoughts—is perhaps illustrated in the small note-book which the painter kept at Gosol, in which there are three scribbles of Apollinaire's name and address with caricatures of him, although he was not with Picasso on this holiday.

Apollinaire met Picasso in a bar in the Rue d'Amster¬ dam towards the end of 1904 or early in 1905, though other and later dates have been given. He had been bom in the Trastevere district of Rome in 1880 and, although he himself liked it to be understood that his father was a high church dignitary, probably a cardinal, he was in fact the illegitimate child of Francesco Flugi d'Aspermont and Angelica Kostrowicka, the young daughter of a Polish refugee captain, who had recently been expelled from an aristocratic convent. Apollinaire's father did not recognise him, and with his mother and brother he passed a wandering and rather insecure early life. He went to school in Monaco and Cannes, which may have some significance for the 'Mediterranean heritage' with which he is often credited. He was a Dreyfusard and, like Picasso, from early years an anarchist; while still at school he founded his version of Picasso's Arte Joven which was a little manuscript newspaper called Le Vengeur. He read a great deal, visited the Ardennes, did some devilling for Le Matin, wrote erotic books for money (this occupation continued nearly all his life), worked in a bank, became a tutor and visited Germany and England. Nearly all his life too he was hopelessly in love with a succession of women, the most important for his art perhaps being the English governess Annie Playden, who inspired the Chanson du Mal-Aimé, and Marie Laurencin, who lived with him for about six years. By the time he met Picasso he had become a regular contributor to the Revue Blanche, had founded his own review Le Festin d'Esope, which we have already mentioned as showing a Nordic quality like that visible in the Blue Period, and was friendly with Salmon, Seurat's friend Fénéon, the Polish anarchist Mécislas Golberg, and Alfred Jarry.

The influence of Alfred Jarry (1873-1907) on the young Apollinaire and on Picasso is hard to assess, but it probably served to strengthen their irrationalism, buffoonery and

dislike of the bourgeois. Jarry made little or no distinction between his life and work—it has been said that he felt free not to be himself in favour of a histrionic personage whose performance was recreated every moment like a work of art. As Gide advocated, he lived his creations and to a lesser extent Picasso and Apollinaire followed him. His play Ubu-Roi, based on a school burlesque of a hated master and performed in 1896, was more violently grotesque and destructive than anything that had been seen for many years. It canalised and embodied what Charles Chassé called the 'Jacquerie artistique' of the time. In this and in the more pornographic Messaline Jarry exhibited that taste for the strange and marvellous which he seems to have transmitted to Apollinaire and to the group around Le Festin d'Esope. Reminiscences of the time emphasise his violence and his habit of firing a revolver for no particular reason, which Picasso and his friends sometimes copied. One feels that the insolence of 'Les Demoiselles d'Avignon' is somewhat akin to his, and that perhaps his ironical system 'Dr Faustroll's Pataphysique', which studied 'the universe additional to the one we know', may have encouraged Picasso to disrupt accepted appearances.

Apollinaire's play, Les Mamelles de Tirésias, which was mostly written in 1903, only a final scene and a prologue being added for its production in 1917, owes much to the rather gross buffoonery of Jarry's Ubu-Roi, but it has a curious streak of seriousness and adventure which perhaps relates it to the beginning of Cubism:

'Il faut laisser le goût et garder la raison

Il faut voyager loin en aimant sa maison

Il faut chérir l'audace et chercher l'aventure

Il faut toujours penser à la France future

N'espérez nul repos risquez tout votre avoir

Apprenez du nouveau car il faut tout savoir'.

This reminds us that from one point of view the development of Cubism was a search for a more austere, less sensuous art in which le goût would be replaced by la raison, and that by 1906 Picasso seemed intent on renouncing romantic prettiness. Les Mamelles de Tirésias also satirises the Utopian day-dreams of those who praise distant Zanzibar at the expense of modern Paris, which may be a gibe against the decadents of the fin-de-siècle, who saw romance everywhere except in their immediate surroundings. Les Mamelles also seems to be a plea for change and experimentation.

Apollinaire was apparently much affected by Baudelaire's ideas about the heroic quality of modern life— although he criticised his rather perverse pessimism— and he praised him for maintaining that all life, even its most shameful and squalid aspects, should be subject to artistic scrutiny. Like Baudelaire Apollinaire made no difficulty about combining subject-matter from everyday life with mediaeval legends, wizards and magical swords. For him:

'Icare Enoch Elie Apollonius de Thyane

Flottent autour du premier aéroplane'.

Before the Cubists no one had used such uncompromisingly modern objects as newspapers and packets of cigarettes in their still-lifes, and this may have some connection with Apollinaire.

Picasso told Zervos that something compelled him to empty his mind of all that he had only just discovered, even before he had been able to control it. His friends, such as Jean Cocteau, have stressed the role of the unconscious and the haphazard in his work. 'Il se contenta de peindre, d'acquérir un métier incomparable et de le mettre au service du hasard.' Apollinaire also advocated the liberation of art from everyday logic and the exaltation of intuition and the creative role of the un¬conscious:

'Je sentais en moi des êtres neufs, pleins de dextérité Bâtir et aussi agencer un univers nouveau'.

This is apparent in such a poem as La Blanche Neige when he imagines that there are angels singing in the sky, one dressed like an officer, another like a cook:

'Bel officier couleur du ciel

Le doux printemps longtemps après Noël

Te médaillera d'un beau soleil

D'un beau soleil

Le cuisinier plume les oies

Ah! tombe neige

Tombe et que n'ai-je

Ma bien-aimée entre mes bras'.

This free and flexible working of the trap-door between conscious and unconscious may have some connection with the lack of self-disgust in Apollinaire and Picasso as compared with an artist such as Cézanne, who was inclined to recoil from his own productions; but Apollinaire and Picasso probably encouraged each other to follow this bent.

Apollinaire's most important critical pronouncements are embodied in L'Esprit Nouveau et les Poètes of 1918, which is, of course, too late to be strictly relevant to the years which we are investigating, but which contains ideas similar to those of 'la bande à Picasso' before 1907. The business of great artists and poets alike, Apollinaire says, is to renew appearances. They are not concerned with imitation or decoration—which at this time were distasteful to Apollinaire and Picasso alike— but with the investigation of form and with new means by which experience can be organised. 'Les poètes ne sont pas seulement les hommes du beau. Ils sont encore et surtout les hommes du vrai en tant qu'il permet de pénétrer dans l'inconnu.'

In L'Esprit Nouveau Apollinaire argues that only by the exploration of the unknown could artists and poets be worthy of the extraordinary scientific and mechanical progress of the century. This belief led in the same direction as did the feeling in Barcelona for 'El gran Excelsior del XX siglo', though it had a different origin.

In 1905 Apollinaire wrote on Picasso twice, in the Revue Immoraliste and La Plume, characterising his art as a mixture of the delicious, the horrible, the abject and the

delicate. He also related the art of his friend to 'the compositional richness and rough decoration of Spanish art in the seventeenth century'. These writings are more laudatory and lyrical, less penetrating than L'Esprit Nouveau, written thirteen years later, but they must have been welcome and valuable to Picasso who was as yet comparatively unknown.

Gertrude Stein and Leo Stein were Picasso's first important patrons because they had more money and understanding than Manyac, Berthe Weill and Clovis Sagot, who had all been buying his pictures to sell again, and could not, like the Steins, afford to indulge their own taste. Gertrude Stein enjoyed being in a minority and is said to have encouraged both Matisse and Picasso to exaggerate tones and colours and to outrage public opinion in other ways. André Salmon wrote later that she never understood the strong element of Jarryesque humour and play-acting in the rituals and lives of Picasso and his friends at this time. ('Les Demoiselles d'Avignon', I believe, owes something to this general enjoyment of parody and the desire to épater le bourgeois', witness Picasso's unlikely suggestion that he was depicting Max Jacob's mother.) But if Gertrude Stein could not understand humour—and she certainly took herself very seriously—she praised Picasso for being one of the first to realise that the twentieth century was different from the nineteenth and needed a different art. Matisse and others, she said, had twentieth-century eyes, but their sense of reality remained that of the nineteenth century. 'The twentieth century is a period when everything cracks, and becomes destroyed and isolated. It is a much more magnificent time than an epoch where everything is normal and follows logically.'

What was remarkable about Gertrude Stein as the patron of Picasso was the fact that she was herself engaged in a parallel if less successful attempt to create a new reality through the destruction of traditional forms. She felt that the old language and the old order of words had become stale and trivial. Born in 1874 and therefore seven years older than Picasso, she had been much influenced by the work she had done at Radcliffe College under William James, including experiments in automatic writing. She became interested in what she called 'people's bottom natures', although Freud's concept of the unconscious was not yet known to her. Her preoccupation with different forms of expression rather than with the content of art, which at this time Picasso shared, may have been partly due to her friendship with Bernard Berenson. Like Picasso too she was bored with the gods of the nineteenth century, as can be seen from a description of one of her own books in a letter to Mabel Weeks: I don't care there aren't any Tchaikovsky Pathétique or Omar Khayyam or Whistler or Wagner or White Man's Burden or green burlap in mine at least not in the present ones.' It is difficult to think of another patron who would have sat eighty times for a portrait and then greeted with equanimity the destruction and total recreation of the head.

Neo-classicism in Painting and Literature:

In 1905-6 Picasso's painting became far more generalised and took on a new classical objectivity, breadth and repose. Such works as 'La Coiffure' (see illus. 170) and 'Les Adolescents' appear to grow out of a more detached investigation of form, and there is

more balance and concern with the subordination of parts to the whole than there had been in earlier pictures. The figures are no longer seen as suffering human beings but as interrelated forms, and the mood of intense misery and despair has changed to a more tranquil, elegiac melancholy. The figures in the key picture of 1905, 'Les Bateleurs', which inspired the fifth Duino Elegy of Rilke (see illus. 149) have little or no psychological relationship with one another, unlike those in 'La Vie'. Leo Stein writes: 'For the first time (in the paintings of this period) Picasso tried for something that was not illustration at all'. In Germany the doctrine of 'significant form' had already been formulated in Hildebrand's Problem of Form, which emphasised the structure of a work of art at the expense of imitation or poetic symbolism. This book had been translated into French in 1903 and its theories may well have filtered through to Picasso's circle.

Another influence on Picasso's painting at this time was Puvis de Chavannes, forty-three of whose works were shown at the Salon d'Automne of 1904. His strange mixture of naïveté and sophistication, the tranquil gestures of his figures, the broad cool areas of colour, the geometrical organisation of his picture, and the simplified drawing appealed to Picasso as they had done to Seurat, Gauguin and Van Gogh. Picasso's projected idyll called 'The Watering Place', for which many studies exist (see illus. 163), derives much from this painter.

Berthe Weill in her book Pan! dans Vœil declares that the young painters were also very much excited by the forty-four works of Seurat shown at the restrospective exhibition held by the Sociétés des Indépendants in March and April 1905. Seurat's influence on Picasso appears in the delicate lines of the slender female nudes such as 'Jeune fille à la chèvre' and 'Fillette à la corbeille fleurie', which are somewhat like 'Les Poseuses', two studies for which appeared at the Indépendants. Picasso had a link with Seurat's circle in Apollinaire's friend the anarchist Fénéon. Picasso's work of this time also derives from a great variety of ancient art—the drawings of Greek white ground vases, archaic Greek and Etruscan marbles and bronzes, and Mesopotamian figurines. There also appear to be some traces of Egyptian art. None of this is surprising, for Soffici, amongst others, records that he often met Picasso in the Louvre.

More important than these individual sources in determining Picasso's new classicism was a basic change in taste which now turned against the misty north, against Gothic and the melancholy languors of the Decadence in favour of the Mediterranean and an art of greater balance and objectivity, just as earlier in the mid¬ eighties men had become surfeited with matter-of-fact documentary realism. In England the reaction was headlong and even panic-stricken; it may have begun as early as 1895 when Wilde went to prison. Beardsley wrote from his death-bed imploring the destruction of all his obscene drawings, and Yeats said, looking back on 1900, 'Everybody got down off his stilts... nobody drank absinthe with his black coffee; nobody went mad; nobody committed suicide; nobody joined the Catholic Church'. George Moore observed that the Old Masters were coming into fashion again. The more conformist sentiment epitomised by Georgian poetry and the enthusiasm roused by the Diamond Jubilee were perhaps the English substitute for the Mediterranean tradition.

In Barcelona the later numbers of Pel i Ploma became less 'extreme' and devoted more space to antiquity. Forma, its successor, was written in Castilian and had Puvis-like illustrations by Joaquin Torres Garcia (cf. illus. 168), and another periodical, Garba,

showed people in classical clothes. There was a certain amount of allusion at this time to ‘Catalunya Griega’ and this was the inspiration for a new opera by Morera and Maragall performed in 1906. Picasso was still in touch with his Spanish friends and his name appeared in a list of the new group formed in Barcelona and called ‘Calendad del Noucentisti’.

By this time, however, Picasso had settled in Paris and it is likely that the classicism in his art of 1905 has closer parallels and connections with the French literary circles which he was then frequenting. He attended the regular Tuesday dinners of André Salmon’s review Vers et Prose, where writers were much preoccupied with renewing ‘the true Mediterranean tradition’ and with what Stuart Merrill had already described as ‘a tumultuous crusade of southerners against the gods of the north’. These ideas had been spreading ever since 1891, when the poet Jean Moréas founded V Ecole Romane. Picasso knew Moréas personally and was liked by him. He used to go with Apollinaire to the Closerie des Lilas, where Moréas reigned, and there they listened earnestly to the lessons of the master. Picasso’s friend, the sculptor Manolo, was for a long time a disciple of Moréas and of classicism, and a newer friend, the Polish anarchist Mécislas Golberg, also went to listen and was so much affected by the prevailing classicism that he redecorated the walls of his room with reproductions of ancient Greek masterpieces.

Moréas had been responsible for the famous Symbolist manifesto of 1886, and as late as 1891 was fêted by the Symbolists at a banquet organised by La Plume in honour of his latest book, Le Pèlerin Passioné. But in the same year he attacked this movement and with du Plessys, Raymond de la Tailhède, Charles Maurras, and Ernest Raynaud founded L'Ecole Romane. This school aimed at renewing the true Gallic chain which had been broken by the Romantics, Parnassians, Naturalists and Symbolists, and at revindicating the Graeco-Latin prin¬ciple, according to them the fundamental tradition of French literature which had flourished with the Troubadours, with Ronsard, and with Racine and La Fontaine. L'Ecole Romane came as a timely antidote for all those who had become disenchanted with northern gloom and subjectivity. Charles Maurras said that it was the reply of the Mediterranean to all those great barbarians who had come down from the Ardennes forests, where Verlaine was born, and from the icy north, from which issued Ibsen, Tolstoy, Rossetti, Swinburne and Shelley. The Romanists aspired towards serenity and calm and the subordination of the personal; they found the cult of ‘le moi’ theatrical and distasteful. Charles Maurras, the most influential critic of the group, wrote articles in La Plume declaring that beauty is harmony, and that a work of art should be submitted to superior reason and the parts subordinated to the whole. Picasso’s harmonious, often nymph-like creatures of this time, his studies of boys in ‘The Watering Place’ (see illus. 163), which have been compared with those on Greek vases, fit in well with this literary fashion, especially as he seems to concentrate on the relation of his figures with surrounding space in a classical way.

Although Moréas founded V Ecole Romane in 1891, the reaction against Symbolism had taken some time to spread, and it was only in 1905 that Picasso was brought in touch with it through Apollinaire and through Salmon’s connection with Vers et Prose. In this year the movement probably reached its height; Moréas published his most Romanist poems. Les Stances, in collected form, and André Salmon produced a long

study of Moréas's development in Vers et Prose. A writer in Le Mercure declared that 'aujourd'hui tout le monde revient au classicisme et à l'antique'. Maurice Denis was also developing his Théories in the same fashionable direction. 'No, appearance is not everything . . . there is also the great architectural research of the Renaissance painters, such as one finds again in the landscapes of Poussin and the portraits of Ingres.' About this time even the Fauves seem to have been influenced by clas¬sicism, both in reacting away from formlessness towards structure and in the choice of such subjects as Matisse's 'Luxe, calme et volupté' (1905), Derain's 'L'Age d'Or' (1905) and Jean Puy's 'Après-midi d'un Faune' (1905). André Gide was also modernising such classical legends as those of Prometheus and Corydon. There was nothing new in the use of classical subjects but they were now treated in a different way. The Symbolists and Decadents had often made an antique setting the pretext for a little pornography, or at least for the delineation of sultry and recondite passions, as in Pierre Louÿs's Aphrodite (1896) or Jarry's Messaline. After Moréas's classical revival it became more usual to emulate Attic grace, simplicity and balance. The more limpid, almost Mozartian, and rather sexless quality of Picasso's dry-point 'Salome' in comparison with Beardsley's treatment of the subject (cf. illus. 26) illustrates how much his work of the time had in common with the literary movement we have just described.

It was characteristic of Picasso not to remain satisfied with the harmonious classicism of such paintings as the 'Toilette' and the 'Adolescents' (see illus. 162) painted on holiday in Gosol near Andorra in the summer of 1906, and at the same time he was producing more austere, sculptural and simplified works with firmer contours such as the 'Woman with Loaves'. In the note-book he kept at Gosol there are examples of both styles (see illus. 171, 172). The new idiom, together with what he had learnt from Cézanne and from Iberian art, was to predominate in the winter of 1906-7 just before he painted 'Les Demoiselles d'Avignon'. Picasso's change of style may owe something to boredom with his own facility and with the melancholy sweetness of the circus pictures, but it was also affected by the ideas of his literary friends. We have seen that such men as Moréas, Salmon, Raynal and Maurras were advocating the return to a more controlled and impersonal art which would replace the fin-de-siècle riot of emotionalism. A more austere, less sensual kind of painting would also have harmonised with the teaching of Nietzsche. The more severe paintings and drawings may also have been affected by the Iberian sculpture on view in the Louvre since the spring of 1906, although in comparison with what was to come in the self-portrait and the portrait of Gertrude Stein there are only faint traces of this. 'Les Demoiselles d'Avignon' itself may be seen both as a further stage towards this more serious and detached investigation of form, form which asserts its supremacy over subject-matter, already noticeable in the Gosol note-book, and also paradoxically as an embodiment of those savage and instinctive forces which were so much admired by Picasso and his friends, when expressed in the writings of Rimbaud, Gide and the young Charles Louis Philippe. They were all delighted on finding in the papers of Philippe, who had died young, the passage, 'Le temps de la douceur et du dilettantisme est passé. Maintenant il faut des barbares. C'est aujourd'hui le commencement du temps de la passion'.

The holiday at Gosol in 1906 seems an appropriate timee to bring this study of Picasso's early background to an end, for once again, as at the beginning of the period under consideration in 1897, Picasso, at a crucial and transitional time for his art, had

deliberately put himself into touch with the simple and harsh realities of Spanish peasant-life; he often said of his earlier visit to Horta de Ebro that it had taught him all he knew.

The development of art obeys its own internal laws and the obscure promptings of the individual artist's temperament, so that even to indicate the conditions surrounding the birth of a work of art is delicate and speculative. As Picasso himself has said, 'How can anyone enter into my dreams, my intentions, my desires, my thoughts which have taken a long time to mature and to come out into the daylight?' It would be an exaggeration to maintain that in these years Picasso owed more to his literary friends than to the work of such artists as Lautrec, Gauguin, Van Gogh or Cézanne; neither can literary influence have been the decisive factor in the birth of Cubism, since Léger and Braque reached the same threshold without having the same close friendships with Jacob and Apollinaire. But, whereas the study of Negro art or Cézanne may reveal stylistic prototypes and explain how Picasso painted the 'Demoiselles', the intellectual, social and even political background can provide valuable clues to the more interesting problem of why he wanted to do so.

There is always some connection between the background and the art of a period, even though the link may be less obvious, more subtle than Marxists have been willing to believe. The daring of the anarchists in Barcelona must have encouraged the artistic daring of Gaudí and Picasso, just as the violence of passions roused by the Dreyfus case is said to have killed Symbolism. Moreover the feeling of optimism about the possibility and necessity of producing a great new art, which we have seen amongst the intellectuals of Barcelona and among Picasso's French friends, probably owed something to the economic position of the artists. Delacroix's pessimism was partly due to the crumbling of the aristocratic foundations of society and the rise of moneyed mediocrities of a kind later to be satirised in Flaubert's Bouvard et Pécuchet. Both Manet and Degas saw with fastidious distaste these new men undermining the cultured haute bourgeoisie to which they belonged. But Picasso and Apollinaire were exuberantly déclassés; they had always moved in a Bohemian world outside the class-system; they had been very poor, with nothing to lose; andonee they had begun to attract the attention of new patrons such as the Steins, the possibilities before them reinforced their artistic optimism. "Tout est possible, tout est réalisable en tout partout et avec tout", Salmon wrote. It is true that Manet made very original artistic discoveries while still wishing his pictures to be hungin the Salon and while still professing no belief in artistic progress. 'He has no pretensions either to overthrow an established mode of painting or to create a new one,' he wrote of himself in the catalogue of his exhibition in 1867, but this feeling probably acted as a brake on Manet and may be partly responsible for the timidity of his later, more conventional works. He was not fighting 'sur la limite de la vie, aux confins de l'art, aux confins de la vie', as Salmon said of Picasso, and he was not like Apollinaire who wrote of himself:

... nous qui combattons toujours aux frontières De l'illimité et de l'avenir'.

These quotations express a feeling which grew up essentially in the revolutionary café world of the new century.

Perhaps it is not altogether fanciful to see a connection between Picasso's frequent borrowings of style and his lack of any sense of artistic property on the one hand and

his manner of life, according to which he and his friends freely used each other's possessions, even to the bed which Picasso slept in by day and Max Jacob at night. The bourgeois Manet and Degas disputed as to which of them had been the first to paint contemporary life, and the rentier Cézanne worried, in a way that Picasso would have found comic, at the idea that Gauguin had stolen his petite sensation.

These years 1897-1906 saw Picasso as an apprentice in his art but gradually reaching a position where 'all the elements were present to him and he drew them not laboriously but luckily'. In this process he must have owed a great deal to the ferment of literary hopefulness and experiment with which he was surrounded. One cannot understand his early art without considering the Nordic 'decadence' in Barcelona, Nietzsche, Symbolism, the neo-classical reaction of Moréas, and perhaps the later cults of irrationalism and 'significant form'. Above all Catalan optimism about the new century and Apollinaire's essential seriousness, his concern for truth, and his search for the unknown were particularly favourable to the birth of a new art. Lacking this, Bonnard, Vuillard and Denis, who had been associated with more archaising, pessimistic and introspective literature, did not appear to feel the same infinite possibilities of artistic adventure, and, writing in 1902 to Vlaminck, Derain— perhaps never more than a revolutionary malgré lui— was even more pessimistic about the prospects of the age: 'Nous n'avons ni à nous créer une nouvelle littérature, ni à découler d'un nouvel esprit... Nous sommes des blessés des temps nouveaux.' Picasso's contrary belief that the new century called for a great new non-realistic art and that it was perfectly possible to produce one, was not entirely due to his adventurous temperament; it also owed a great deal to the writers of Paris and Barcelona, not least to Jacob and Apollinaire.